DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 242 600 SO 015 468

AUTHOR Hanel, Robert R.
TITLE A Positive Self Image. It's Your Choice. A Classroom Program for the Development of Self Esteem.
PUB DATE 82
NOTE 152p.
AVAILABLE FROM Robert R. Hanel, 3145 S.E. Franklin, Portland, OR 97202 ($12.00; quantity discounts available).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Class Activities; Curriculum Guides; Human Dignity; Learning Activities; Models; Personal Autonomy; *Personality Development; Personality Traits; Postsecondary Education; Rational Emotive Therapy; Secondary Education; Self Concept; *Self Esteem; Self Evaluation (Individuals); Units of Study
IDENTIFIERS Ellis (Albert); PF Project

ABSTRACT

Arranged into two parts, the book provides a model for helping students develop a positive self-esteem. Part 1 presents five lessons aimed at improving self-image. Lesson 1 focuses on the relationship between one's self-worth and one's behavior. Lesson 2 deals with appearance and the notion that body characteristics may change one's value as a human being. Lesson 3 focuses on the visible, public self as opposed to the invisible, more private self. In lesson 4, a "monster" characterization illustrates obstacles hindering self-acceptance. The final lesson in part 1 summarizes the effects of relying on one's behavior and appearance for a sense of self-worth. Part 2 is adapted from Albert Ellis's Rational Emotive Therapy (R.E.T.) counseling model and follows a format similar to that in part 1. Lessons are presented on taking responsibility for one's own feelings, underlying beliefs that lead to debilitating emotions and behaviors, challenging negative attitudes, discovering sources of personal distress, and gaining insight into one's vision of reality. Each lesson includes an extensive explanation, suggested activities, and a model for presentation. The document concludes with a script for a play. (LH)

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POSITIVE SELF IMAGE

IT'S YOUR CHOICE

A Classroom Program For The Development of Self Esteem

ROBERT R. HANEL

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FORWARD

Everyone seems to know that each of us has a self-image. It is also common knowledge that we act out whatever image we have of ourselves. I'm sure you have heard the story about the Indian Brave who found the egg of an eagle and put it in the nest of the prairie chicken. When the eagle was hatched, he looked around and did what all the other prairie chickens did: cawed and scratched the ground and rose a few feet into the air and came down again. Then one day in his early life he saw a large, majestic bird gracefully winging through the skies. "What is that?" he asked. One elderly prairie chicken replied, "That is an eagle. But don't you ever dream that you could be like that. You're just a prairie chicken." So he continued to caw and scratch around and rise only a few feet above the ground for the rest of his life. And so he died ... thinking he was a prairie chicken.

All this is common knowledge. The hard part is developing a positive self-image. Unfortunately, there is no magic wand we can wave over our own heads or the heads of others, transforming us from prairie chickens and releasing the eagle that is caged in all of us.

The importance of these truths about self-image is the importance of this book. There is no magic wand, but there are programs that can help us form new and better images of ourselves.

In this book, my friend, Bob Hanel, has put together as good a program as I have seen anywhere. The special value of this book and program is that it is designed for helping the young form positive, life-giving self images. The minds and hearts of the young are like soft wax: the impressions made so easily in the green years last for a lifetime.

Bob Hanel has done all of us a great service in providing this book and program.

John Powell, S.J.
Loyola University of Chicago

INTRODUCTION

It is my observation that very many of us are uncomfortable with our condition, i.e., being fallible human beings. The thought of being imperfect, and therefore open to criticism, often leaves us anxious, whiney and depressed.

It seems to me that first as adults, but especially as educators, we have the responsibility to examine and challange our own view of life and present our findings to the young people placed in our daily custody. True, this is a shared responsibility, it comes to us by default, but as educators we are clearly the adults in the best position to meet this responsibility in an organized, well thought out manner.

It is my belief that most of us have inherited, and we pass on, a confused notion of what being human is all about. We have come to believe that human value is definable based on two criteria--performance and appearance. Our identity, our value, is frequently decided by the extent to which we meet these two criteria and we experience an indentity crisis when we don't meet someone else's expectation.

The truth, as I see it, is that we are all green and growing. We are incomplete; we are mistake-makers and we need to learn to speak a language that says, "I can live with that.", rather than, "I can't stand it! That's terrible! That shouldn't be!"

It is our challange not to make decisions for young people about how to live their lives, but to provide insights for them to examine, question and perhaps experience. It is their decision as to whether or not to incorporate that insight into their lives. If they do, change will take place. Our contribution to that change will have been no more than a willingness to risk sharing a piece of our own lives.

This book presents one model for that sharing. I have written as explicitly as possible so that this program can be presented with little or no additional preparation beyond the content of this manual. The format I present is:

(1)The Insight to be taught.
(2)An Explanation of the Insight.
(3)Activities and Exercises used to teach the Insight.
(4)An Explanation of how the Activities and Exercises can be presented and a rationale for the presentation.
(5)A Presenter's model to demonstrate how I have taught the Activities and Exercises.

Though I have written with care to be very inclusive and provide explanations, and examples, even to the point of repetition, I offer this program as a guide and model. I encourage the presenter of this program to pick and choose activities and exercises and to include new activities that spring from the creative mind as well as the written page. This program is a sharing of a vision of life as it has developed, and is developing, through a variety of experiences. As the activities and exercises reflect your vision of life, use them, but don't fail to be introspective and creative and share your "secrets" for happiness through the development of your own activities and exercises. One other suggestion, the Insights offered in this program are best presented through personal experiences, lived examples. Many examples are offered, but many other personal examples of your own will serve to clarify the Insights for the participants.

This program is not written for any particular group of presenters or participants. I believe it could be presented by any person who believes , and tries to live, the Insights offered. The participants, in my experience, have ranged from 7th grade students to adults in the Oregon State Penitentiary. I believe with revision of some of the wording and with applicable examples, this program could be taught to primary students. My wife, Julie, has successfully used parts of this program with her 1st grade students.

I have presented these Insights in a three week block of time (45 minute periods, five days per week). This has been satisfactory though I believe a longer period of time, which would allow for more discussion, would be beneficial.

The focus of this program is on the discovery of the positive SELF that exist within all of us, but sometimes gets hidden behind nonsensical beliefs. Because of this focus, the word "SELF" is capitalized throughout this book. Grammatical rules are occasionally bent in order to present this emphasis.

A Student Notebook accompanies this book. Both the content of the Student Notebook and the answers to the Exercises and Activities are included in this manual.

I suggest that before presenting any of this program, you read the book in it's entirety. Some concepts presented early will be better understood when viewed in the context of the entire program.

INSIGHT #1: WHAT I CAN DO, OR CANNOT DO FOR THAT MATTER, DOES NOT CHANGE MY VALUE AS A HUMAN BEING.

Explanation of the Insight

"I had better do this right! Wouldn't it be awful if I made a mistake? What a nincompoop I'd be! But then, if I do it well, wouldn't that be great? Wouldn't I be something?

Imagine the person speaking or thinking those words. The person I have in mind is not calm, peaceful or on the verge of a prenap stretch. The person I see is stress-filled and anxiety ridden -- and with good cause. That sort of talk is anxiety producing.

Think about your nervous moments (hours?) when you were called on to perform for others. What were you telling your SELF? Can you remember thinking, "This is an opportunity (a trial?) to prove my goodness?" It's a rather common occurrence and it happens commonly because of a conditional and SELF defeating view of who we are. Part of this view of SELF includes the belief that there is a real and undeniable relationship between what we do as potentially productive persons and the value of who we are as human beings. Most folks accept this as a fact and see it as means by which our existence can be justified, a means by which we can prove our value as human beings. ("Please take his opportunity to prove your goodness.")

It is the intent of this program to argue against this vision of our SELF and argue for a less conditional SELF image.

Think of your SELF as having two parts -- a DOING part and a BEING part. Also, imagine that life is evaluated on a point system. The BEING part just exists. There are no changes in this part. The value is infinite. The goodness is undeniable. The BEING receives full point value. Why not? It never messes up. It just is. The DOING part is quite a different story. This part is changeable, often unpredictable and is always open to some sort of evaluation. Since everyone's BEING is exactly the same (of infinite value and unchangeable goodness) it is easy to just forget that it exists (what good is it for anyway?). The focus, therefore, is turned toward our DOING. If a human being's worth is to be evaluated, and of course it constantly is, it is here that the energy is concentrated; it is here that the variable point values are assigned. The BEING becomes insignificant. The result: Our human value is erroneously determined by demonstration rather than existence. Our goodness is conditional rather than unconditional. BEING is nothing. DOING is everything. Points are arbitrarily assigned to various acts and values can easily be reported through a look, a word or a gesture on a variety of "human value" tallying systems. Certainly recognition is given to the dignity and inestimable value of all personkind, but when the chips are down and we're

trying to pick a "winner", demonstrable value predominates every time.

This imaginary view of the human condition is not too far removed from the prevalent image of SELF. The focus of Part I is to challenge this limited and limiting view of our humanness, to attempt to clearly present our SELF as having two parts and to establish that our BEING SELF has a significant value. The focus of Insight #1 is to put the value of DOING into proper perspective.

A nonsensible reason for doing something is to make a better person. A sensible reason for doing something is to achieve (or attempt to achieve) a goal. Goals come in all shapes and sizes. They may be lofty and noble, i.e., to help all personkind or to feed the hungry of the world. They may be more inward, i.e., to become a household word or to become very, very rich. A goal may be simple and light, i.e., to have fun or to exercise. It may be personal, i.e., "just because I want to do it" or "just for the pleasure of it." The point is, the achievement of goals, either conscious or unconscious, is a product of DOING. Achieving a goal is the only sensible reason for doing something. Never can doing something, anything, increase our value as human beings; never can doing something give us more intrinsic worth as a person. We may do something that is good but that act does not increase our goodness. Conversely, we may do something that is bad and that act does not decrease our goodness. Many believe that it can and talk as if that magic transformation has occurred before our very eyes. When someone lies, they are called "a liar". When someone steals they are called "a thief". The focus is on the change in personal value rather than on the act. When a person is labeled by his act, an attempt is made to degrade (or raise up) his human value ("You're a liar. You are no longer a dignified and beautiful human being but a liar. Because of this unacceptable act, you are unacceptable."). If the focus is correctly placed, on the act as an act and we don't believe in magical changes in human value, we will criticize the DOING and not the BEING ("You lied! I wish you hadn't done that because trust is very important to our relationship.").

Focus is all important. There are good acts and bad acts but there are no good and bad persons. Our goodness is a given. It cannot be changed, increased or decreased or evaluated. Only our actions can be judged or have variable merit.

Ours is a performance-oriented society. We honor and reward outstanding performance and, in fact, we usually insist on it; "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well." "I only ask that you do your best." "Nice guys finish last." The quarrel here is not with performance (good or bad) but rather with the debilitating belief that there is a correlation between performance and human value -- DOING and BEING (Please take this opportunity to prove your goodness.).

There are a lot of ways to measure various performances -- stop watches, grade books, critics, score boards, etc. There are no instruments that will measure our worth as human beings. In the absence of that measuring device, we often choose to make our (and everybody else's) value commensurate with the value of something that can be evaluated -- performance. That's a pity. A lot of people rarely get to like their SELF very much because they rarely do well enough (by someone's standard). DOING is a selfish monster. Usually there is more to do and a better way to do it.

Throughout this program references will be made to "monsters". This is because the word seems so appropriate in trying to challenge nonsense beliefs. Webster defines "monstrous" as "deviating greatly from the natural form or character; shockingly wrong or ridiculous". The definition sounds like an appraisal of an attack on our human value. How ridiculous and shockingly wrong it is to believe "I am no better than what I do". What a deviation from our natural form (one of goodness and intrinsic value). Those who adhere to this value-based-on-doing belief are feeding an insatiable monster. It is the rare person who is long satisfied with his/her accomplishments. Therefore, it is the rare person who could long be satisfied with his/her SELF. Moreover, insistence on clinging to this kind of destructive (self-defeating) belief is detrimental to good mental health. No doubt about it.

Before getting on to the Activities and the Model for Presentation of This Insight, I want to emphasize a previous point. What we <u>do</u> as human being is important because it may lead to the fulfillment of goals. That's important. We may even feel fulfilled. But, <u>it</u> does not lead to the fulfillment of human beings; <u>it</u> does not make us better humans; <u>it</u> is not a requirement for entrance into the human race. I once read somewhere (this may or may not be true) that President Truman's mother warned her son as they moved into the White House, "Harry, this house (it) has fooled a lot of people into thinking they're something they're not." Good focus Mrs. Truman! The president <u>does</u> some mighty important, impressive and far-reaching things. But not once, in the entire history of this country, have the actions of any president transformed him from a human being into something greater. Presidents can be more powerful but they cannot be greater. Neither can anyone else.

Suggested Activities and a Model for Presentation

(NOTEBOOK) INSIGHT #1: WHAT I CAN DO, OR CANNOT DO FOR THAT MATTER, DOES NOT CHANGE MY VALUE AS A HUMAN BEING.

PRESENTER: "In your notebook on Page 1 is the word 'Insight #1'. On the space provided, please copy the insight as I write it on the board."

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: THE WORTH GAME I -- A SINKING SHIP

PASSENGERS (PLACE AN "X" BY YOUR FIVE SURVIVORS)

____YOU	____CARPENTER
____SHIP'S CAPTAIN	____TEACHER
____TEENAGER	____CHEMIST
____PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL PLAYER	____PRIVATE SECRETARY
____DOCTOR	____ASSASSIN
____HOUSEWIFE	

GOAL: SURVIVAL

EXPLANATION: It is suggested that you jump right into the above activity without offering an explanation of the insight. The Worth games (I and II) and related discussions probably will clarify the meaning.

In this activity you tell the story of an incident in which a limited number of people must be selected from a group. Those selected live. Those not selected die. Clearly state that the selection of who lives and who dies is based only on what they can do to contribute to the survival of the group. Survival is the goal. Since survival is the goal, it will be necessary to know what each of the persons can do to determine who can best help to accomplish the goal.

You may want to present this activity as follows. This is not meant to be the way but simply a model. The point of this activity is to show the difference between

human value and performance value. The credibility of your story is not nearly as important as demonstrating this point.

PRESENTER: "O.K. I'm going to tell you a story. When it's over I'm going to ask you to make some decisions. Listen carefully so you can make these decisions wisely.

It's the Spring of the year and late in the evening -- approximately 10:00. An ocean liner, the name escapes me, is cruising somewhere in the South Pacific. Most of the passengers and crew are up on the Poop Deck boogying the night away. Suddenly, an explosion occurs. We don't know what caused it, but the entire ship is blown to smithereens -- except for a single lifeboat. I'll tell you more about that later. Most of the people, sad to say, did not survive the explosion. Miraculously, eleven people did. I don't know how. I didn't write this story, I just tell it. As we join the eleven survivors, they are all floating in the water and clinging hopefully to the single surviving lifeboat.

Fortunately, the boat is unbroken; unfortunately, it will only hold six people. Fortunately, these are tropical waters so there is no chance of freezing in the water; unfortunately, the waters are shark-infested and the sharks have been only temporarily scared off by the explosion but they will soon be back -- would you believe in ten minutes? Explosions make them hungry so we will have to choose our survivors quickly. Yes, friends, that's what we must do -- decide who gets in the boat and lives and who stays in the water and dies. An awesome responsibility. Before we choose, let me describe the lifeboat and the people in the water.

The boat is wooden and has in it two oars, a carpenter's kit that contains a hammer, nails, saw and some other valuable tools. You may be wondering what a carpenter's kit is doing in a lifeboat but just be glad it's there because the boat took a lickin'. While it is intact, its seaworthiness is in question. There is also a medicine kit which would be the envy of many a doctor's office. It's incredibly well supplied.

Finally, there is a sign on the boat that says, "Maximum number of survivors -- 6.' It's written in five languages.

(STUDENT: "Why not put just light people in and then you could take more than six?")

"A good and frequently asked question. The answer is a simple one. This boat especially was designed to hold six survivors no matter what size. Any more and it will sink. There have been many complaints to the manufacturer about this but so far no changes have been made.

Now, what about the people? On Page 1 of your notebook you will find the words "Activity: The Worth Game -- A Sinking Ship.' Below that you will see the surviving persons. Let me tell you about them. First, the ship's captain."

(STUDENT: "I thought the captain was supposed to go down with the ship.")

"I'm not surprised that you raised that question. He tried and tried but he kept bobbing up to the top.

Now let's see. Where were we? Oh, yes. There's also a teenager. He's a boy and he's 13 years old. There's a professional football player. He's 6' 7" and solid muscle. There's a doctor. She's about 60 years old. There's a housewife. She's the mother of two small children. They're at home. Who else? There's a carpenter. He's very good with tools. Remember, there are some tools on the boat and the boat is a little wobbly after the explosion. And there's a teacher -- that teacher is me who gives you your grades. Remember that when you choose survivors. Oh, yes, there's the chemist, a brilliant person who can do anything with chemicals and there are some in the medicine kit. Then there's the private secretary who works in a law office. And finally there is the farmer.

(Note: It's important that you emphasize the roles of the survivors that

have clearly definable skills which are valuable to the goal of survival.)

O.K. Those are the characters in our story with the exception of one -- you. You're also in the water. You're one of the survivors. Remember, our goal is to survive. Under the list of characters in your notebook is the word "Goal". After that word, write in the work "survival".

Here's what we're going to do. I want you to tell me who is going to be in your boat. Who will most likely help you to survive? Only six people are going to make it so pick the group that has the best chance of meeting the goal. You don't know where you are or how long it will be before you are rescued.

To begin with, everyone wants you in the boat. You have a special skill. We don't know what it is but it will help everybody to survive. You insist on staying in the water and giving your place to someone else, but even above your protest they throw you in the boat. So who else are you taking with you? Remember, the goal is to survive so choose the people who will most likely help you do that. When you choose someone you have to tell why you are taking that person. What can he/she do. O.K.? Whom are you taking?

(STUDENT: "The ship's captain.")

"Why him?"

(STUDENT: "So he can navigate our boat. He can use the stars to tell us where to go.")

"That's right. In fact in my story -- you can each make up your own personal stories about the characters -- just before the ship exploded he was charting a course and knows exactly where we are. Pretty lucky, huh?"

(STUDENT: "Did you say the chemist was a man or a woman?")

"Does it make a difference?"

(STUDENT: "It does to me.")

"O.K. Since we each have our own boat we'll

each have our own story about the characters. You can make the chemist whatever you want.

(STUDENT: "I'm taking the chemist. She can use the chemicals in the medicine kit to make the salt water drinkable.")

"Good idea. Who else? How about the pro football player? Anyone taking him?"

(STUDENT: "He sounds so big he might sink the boat.")

"Remember, the boat holds six no matter what size. In my story this guy is going. He's so tough he could row fast enough to pull a water-skier behind the boat. But don't get any ideas to save another person because we don't have skis."

(STUDENT: "How about using remains from the ship to make skis or even a raft?")

"Clever idea but the ship has been blown to smithereens. There is not as much as a splinter left.

O.K. Where were we? Oh, yes, the pro football player. With his strength he could certainly row this boat well. Who else?"

(STUDENT: "The teenager. He's young and has his whole life to live. He deserves a chance to live.")

"Well, certainly he deserves to live. So do they all. But in my story he can't do anything to help us survive. In fact, he's been in a constant state of shock since he hit the water and is just staring into space. But you can put whomever you want on your boat."

EXPLANATION: And so on with the story until all of the characters have been discussed. If some are not selected (like the private secretary), ask, "Why not?" Solicit the understanding that she cannot <u>do</u> anything to contribute to the goal. Once the list

has been discussed, ask everyone to select five of the characters by placing an "X" in front of the chosen characters. These will be their survivors. Once they have completed that, have a group vote and arrive at a concensus. When five characters have been agreed upon, review the selection.

PRESENTER: "O.K. We've agreed the doctor is going. What can he do? Right. He can fix the sick. Why the captain? What can he do to help us survive?"

EXPLANATION: The point to be emphasized is that we are evaluating behaviors -- valuable behaviors which support our purpose versus relatively unvaluable behaviors which do not. One character was not better than another. Rather, some were able to help achieve this particular goal and some were not.

After the point is made, tell them we are going to play the game again but we're going to change the goal just a bit.

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: THE WORTH GAME II -- A SINKING SHIP

PASSENGERS (PLACE AN "X" BY YOUR FIVE SURVIVORS)

____YOU	____CARPENTER
____SHIP'S CAPTAIN	____TEACHER
____TEENAGER	____CHEMIST
____PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL PLAYER	____PRIVATE SECRETARY
____DOCTOR	____ASSASSIN
____HOUSEWIFE	

GOAL: CHOOSE THOSE WITH MOST HUMAN VALUE

EXPLANATION: The second part of this activity is to present the difference between behavioral value (worth) and human value (worth). To do this we will get everyone back in the ship. The presentation might go like this:

PRESENTER: "Let's start all over again. Same ship. Same explosion -- 'Kaboom!. The same people are floating in the water hanging on to the same lifeboat. It still only holds six

people so we have to choose again. But this time we're not choosing on the basis of what each person can do, but on the basis of human value. Which six persons are the most valuable and why? Oh, yes, this time you have to be selected too. Got any ideas?

(STUDENT: "Well me. I'm the most valuable to me.")

"O.K. What makes you the most valuable? What criteria do you use to make that judgment? How do you know you are more valuable? We could see the doctor fix somebody. We could see that the private secretary had no special skills to meet the needs of the previous crisis situation. What can we see, observe, about your human value that makes it greater?"

(STUDENT: "I just am valuable.")

"I agree with that. What I'm asking is that you prove to all of us, and your SELF, that you have greater value than the others."

(NOTE: This is an important point to push -- "Prove it." Human value is an intangible. Its existence can be neither proven nor disproven. This program is written on the basis of faith in its existence. It trusts in the intrinsic, unchanging value of SELF. This value cannot be given or taken away. It's constant and always is.)

(STUDENT: No response.)

(STUDENT: "I'd take the doctor. He can save human lives and that gives him value.")

"No, you're talking about behavioral value -- what he can do. We already did that game. Now we're talking about human value, period."

(STUDENT: "That's what gives the doctor value -- what he can do. He can save people.")

"So does that mean we let the secretary die, the sharks will surely eat her, just

because she can't do anything as significant as save a life? Can we reasonably conclude that she is therefore less valuable as a human being? Who can say you are less valuable as a human being than the captain -- or me? How would anyone make that decision? What guidelines would be followed?"

EXPLANATION: After the students have tangled with this concept for awhile, through your constant challenging, summarize the point that no criteria has been developed by which human value can be measured. No one has ever been assigned the job of building a ruler by which we can measure human value. (To concretize an intangible we will say we all have exactly two tons of Human Worth.) Certainly we can agree on good and bad behavior but not good and bad people. A grade book is a record of student behavior -- performance. Is there a grade book for human worth? The grade book, like other measures of performance, is sometimes confused as a record for human value also.

Use as many examples as necessary to make the distinction between human worth and performance worth. Stay with it until you believe everyone is at least beginning to understand. "Understand" is a key word. The material presented does not have to be believed. That's a choice. But stick with them until it appears they understand.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: DISCUSSION

WHAT IS HUMAN WORTH? MY UNCHANGING VALUE AS A HUMAN BEING.

HOW MUCH HUMAN WORTH DO YOU HAVE? 2 TONS

WHAT IS PERFORMANCE WORTH? THE VALUE OF WHAT I DO. GOAL ACHIEVING ACTIVITY.

EXPLANATION: The belief in the equality of DOING and BEING (Performance worth and human worth) is strongly imbedded in all of us. This insight is a strong challenge to a popular notion. Allow plenty of discussion time to clear the ground between the opposing points of view.

The questions in the exercise on Page 1 of the notebook are not meant to define

the parameters of the discussion. Consider them touchstones of the kind of understanding you are trying to elicit. At the end of the discussion ask that the questions be answered.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: QUIZ

PLACE AN "X" BY ANY OF THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIORS WHICH YOU BELIEVE COULD INCREASE YOUR HUMAN WORTH.

____BEING SMARTER	____BEING BRAVER
____BEING ATHLETIC	____BEING ARTISTIC
____BEING CLEVER	____BEING BETTER LIKED
____BEING RICH	____BEING FRIENDLIER
____BEING STRONGER	____DOING WELL ON THIS QUIZ

PLACE AN "X" BY ANY OF THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIORS WHICH YOU BELIEVE COULD DECREASE YOUR HUMAN VALUE.

____SAYING SOMETHING STUPID	____BEING TEASED
____ACTING WEIRD	____BEING IGNORED
____BEING AFRAID	____BEING WRONG
____LOSING	____LYING
____BEING WEAK	____DOING POORLY ON THIS QUIZ

EXPLANATION: Use this simple quiz as a summary exercise for this insight. No "X" will be placed in the blanks because Human Value does not change. No matter what we do we always have it -- two tons worth of precious cargo that is always with us.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES?

PERFORMANCE WORTH CHANGES AND CAN BE JUDGED.

ITS GOAL ORIENTED. HUMAN WORTH IS UNCHANGEABLE. ITS VALUE IMMEASURABLE.

EXPLANATION: Ask for oral responses to this summary exercise. Encourage the evaluation of comments made so the participants are helping each other to understand the concepts. Be a model as one who distinguishes between DOING and BEING. If, after an incorrect comment, someone says, "You're stupid," respond with something like: "In this class we distinguish between DOING and BEING. How could you have more accurately corrected Bob?" The answer, of course, is: "Your comment was incorrect" (but incorrect comments don't make stupid people. Our goodness never changes even though we are fallible people.).

Be Creative: Any other ideas on how to present this insight? Use whatever you think might work. How about lining up the students by various performance prowess (pencil balance on one finger, longest balance on one foot with eyes closed, longest paper airplane flight, etc.). Most skilled in the front of the line, least in the back. Then, have them line up according to their human value. Insist on tangible criteria for their choice. Good luck!

INSIGHT #2: MY BODY CHARACTERISTICS DO NOT CHANGE MY VALUE AS A HUMAN BEING.

Explanation of the Insight

This chapter continues to argue for a more positive concept of Human Value. Rather than behavior, this chapter will focus on appearance (all the characteristics that contribute to how we look).

The purpose of this insight is to question the validity of the belief that appearance and worth as a human being are somehow related. Our society "worships", seeks after and is prejudiced toward "good" looks. Attractiveness is treated not only as a cosmetic advantage, but also as a sign of special worth as a human being. The advertising industry spends millions of dollars to entice us to their product with the promise that we too might enjoy greater happiness (SELF celebration) through the new beauty received from religious use of Brand X. In a culture so focused on attractiveness, these millions of dollars are well spent. What constitutes the "right" look has been very clearly pointed out and titles are bestowed on those who do not (or cannot) meet the standard -- "Nerd", "Turkey", "Square", etc. (titles that clearly are dehumanizing).

As in Insight #1, a challenge is offered to confront the belief that value as human beings can be changed by (what we do) how we look. The counterbelief continues to be that Human Value is unchangeable and our worth as human beings is indisputable. Human Value is simply a given and nothing can either increase or decrease that value. We are not used cars or antique clocks. We neither diminish nor increase with age, condition, or change in appearance. We quite simply remain constant. In addition to the constancy, we all have exactly the same amount of Human Value. That never changes.

This concept of Human Value may be difficult to accept. In a scientific world of computer analysis, we look for (insist on) evidence. I'm sorry to report that this program does not offer a computer tape of emperically validatable evidence regarding the existence of the internal and unchanging goodness of humankind. It does offer the awareness that there is no evidence to the contrary. In this void many a heated debate has been held, but when the dust settles it still comes down to "What do you choose to believe?" This program chooses to believe in the infinite goodness of humankind.

Begin with the understanding that many persons judge their value according to what they judge to be the value of their appearance. It is the rare person indeed who does not think less of his SELF when he decides he is not as attractive as he should be. As an example, consider just one facet of "good" appearance -- body size. How many people are there whose value is determined for them each morning by the numbers on a bathroom scale? The evidence is clear that it is not healthy to be excessively over

weight. No argument there. And, many agree, it's not cosmetically desirable. So be it. But in our culture many have also made the nonsensical judgment (decision), based on no objective reality at all, that the more we weigh (above the established limits), the less value we have. I'm sure there are some who would argue that this is overstating the case. That the charge against overweight persons is directed not toward their humanity but toward their condition. I don't agree. Think about the dehumanizing names given to fat people both by SELF and others -- "Tubby", "Lardo", "Cow", etc. Titles such as these focus on the humanity (the Human Value), not on the condition. Of course, the problem doesn't exist just for those who have overstretched their limit. Skinny ain't so good either (sayeth the book, author and publisher unknown). So in this SELF evaluating society is it possible to know if you're "just right?" Oh, yes. The scales, the notches on a belt or even the person sitting next to you can tell you if you're O.K. and therefore meet the criteria for full participation in the human race (only those who have correctly filled out their body forms may run).

If a person struggling with an appearance problem (whatever it might be) focused only on the problem, the resolution would simply be a challenge to change. But because of the confused concept of SELF, the focus often gets confused and complicated. A battle begins not only to change cosmetically (weight, hair, clothing, complexion, etc.), but also to increase the Human Value. More than a challenge to change, it becomes a fight for dignity and worth. This inner struggle manifests itself through hostility, depression and a variety of emotional responses reflective of a confused notion of Human Value.

Human Value does not lend itself to objective evaluation. What is the criteria for human value? Where can we go to weigh our worth? What would be a "good amount"? (To give Human Value a sense of something tangible, two tons are assigned to every human being even though it's immeasurable.)

The purpose of Insight #1 was to distinguish between behavior and Human Value. How we behave is obviously very important. Our behavior determines the goals we will achieve and that provides the basis by which to evaluate behaviors ("Will what I am doing help me to reach my goal?"). The same focus is applicable to Insight #2 -- appearance is goal oriented. For example, the research I've read seems quite clear that attractive people are generally promoted to better jobs more rapidly than their less attractive coworkers. The morality of that situation is not the concern here. I'm just pointing out an objective reality -- a truth to be recognized and sensibly dealt with. If a person were interested in being promoted, it would be to her advantage to make herself as attractive as possible. Or, if a person is trying to attract another person, "appropriate" appearance might do the trick to achieve that goal. It's having the cosmetic edge.

The point is this: How we look (hair style, clothes, dimples,

pimples, smiles, glasses, height, etc.) are important only in terms of satisfying our goals, but they won't do one single thing for our already perfect and complete Human Value.

The refusal to make this distinction between human value and appearance results in all sorts of misery. Listen to the person who says, "Nobody likes me. I look like a jerk. I'm ugly. If only I could look like So-and-so, then people would like me." The desire (the insistence) to look "good" and be liked are merely smoke screens for the real and often unspoken problem: "I don't like my SELF. I'm not good. As I am right now I am unacceptable." A confused belief is busy at work here which says, "My value is dependent on my appearance. My acceptability is dependent on my value." That circular thinking conjures up images of a pup chasing its tail. That's about how productive that belief and that use of energy is. It would be more productive and less misery producing to believe in unchangeable goodness and value and see appearance as a goal-achieving quality. If a goal is not achieved, try, try again. But the devastation experienced through the belief in an unacceptable SELF could be avoided.

The original "Hippies" had the right idea. They refused to buy into the absurd idea that acceptable appearance doth an acceptable person make. They wore old clothes, quit taking frequent baths and let their hair grow. It was a beautiful statement about our ridiculous belief that you can tell a truly "good" person just by looking. Well you know what happened to the original idea -- it became the norm. Soon the "good" people were those who looked a mess. "Drop in, take off, tune out and turn on" became the behavioral and appearance guidelines of the neo-beautiful people. A new standard was developed and it was exactly the same crazy belief: "Look right to be right" (same rules, new game). During the late '60's and early '70's some rather clear lines were drawn between the "good" guys and the "bad" guys. What was especially interesting was that the criteria for "good" and "bad" depended on which side you were on.

How does one determine who has the greater value as a human being? It just can't be done.

(NOTEBOOK) INSIGHT #2: MY BODY CHARACTERISTICS (APPEARANCE) DO NOT CHANGE MY VALUE AS A HUMAN BEING.

PRESENTER: "In your notebook on Page 3 is the word 'Insight #2'. On the space provided, please copy the insight as I write it on the board.

EXERCISE: DISCUSSION

EXPLANATION: Discuss the absurdity of the belief that "good" appearance makes "good" people. Use the ideas in the previous "Explanation", other information you have gathered and your own good common sense.

Be challenging. Dare them to evaluate why they choose to look as they do (obviously our total appearance is not by our choice but much of it is; hair style, clothes, even the way we walk and sit can be a decision). Look at your group. See a distinct style of dress or other specific appearance (brand name shoes, hair style, etc.) that applies to many of them. Talk to them about their motivation for accepting the norm. Your opening statement might go something like this:

PRESENTER: "Many of us become part of the current fashions. Fads are established and we join. It's a decision we make. Many of you wear your hair in the same style. I think it looks pretty nice. I assume that's your goal: to look pretty and attract the attention of others. That seems to me to be a good goal. But do you know what often happens? We get fooled into thinking that the "good" looking people, those who are in style, are better than the "bad" looking people. Do you ever do that? Do you ever think that way? If you're not sure, ask your SELF how you talk about people you don't believe look just "right". Do you have the special names for them? "Scuzz?" "Dog?" "Chunk?" If you do have special names, it's because you believe, rather foolishly, that Human Value can change. So, you give people names that reflect not a change in their appearance but rather a change in their Human Value.

You can do something about your SELF if you don't like the way you look. You can change your appearance -- within limits -- but you can't change your value as a human being. If anyone thinks he can, please do it for me right now before my very eyes because I want to see it happen.

NOTE: Challenge the nonsense beliefs regularly. Ask for evidence that you and others can observe.

EXPLANATION: Continue the discussion by offering the possibility that they have confused their value with their appearance. If necessary, call out certain kids: "Julie, you're always so nicely dressed. What's your motivation for spending all the time, energy and money to look so nice?" (Her response may be: Fidget. Fidget. Fidget. "Well, I just like to look nice." A clear statement of goal orientation. However, there may be an unstated reason behind the goal which says, "...and then I will be better accepted -- loved and wanted -- and thereby realize my goodness as a human being.")

The point to be stressed continually is that appearance is goal oriented, period. To those who claim to already know that, challenge them to examine their behavior to see if they act on that knowledge: "How do you talk about those who do not meet the standard? Are you judgmental about their value as human beings? What are the words you use to describe them? Do you describe body characteristics or value as human beings?" ("A real tweek" describes nothing about how a person looks.)

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: CAN YOU DISCOVER THE CORRECT ANSWER?

true	FALSE	Good appearance makes a good person.
TRUE	false	Good appearance makes a good appearing person.

PRESENTER: "Now that the discussion is over, we're going to work on a little quiz to see if you were listening. Let's do it together. It's on Page 3 in your notebook."

EXPLANATION: Obviously the "quiz" is not to test their understanding but rather to punctuate a point.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: WHAT IS ONE GOOD REASON TO IMPROVE YOUR PERFORMANCE AND/OR YOUR APPEARANCE?

TO ACHIEVE A GOAL.

CAN YOU THINK OF ANOTHER GOOD REASON TO IMPROVE YOUR PERFORMANCE AND/OR YOUR APPEARANCE?

(THERE ARE NONE.)

PRESENTER: "Moving right into the next exercise on Page 3, answer those two questions.

O.K. What did you get for answers?"

EXPLANATION: Most will be able to answer the first question (To achieve a goal.). Some will try to answer the second. Take the time to help them discover the goal orientation in their answers. Answer: "Because my mother told me to." Goal: 1. To avoid punishment. 2. To get a favor. 3. To please mom. 4. Etc.

Human Value is constant. A better person does not result from better appearance.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING, PLEASE:

A NEW STUDENT COMES TO SCHOOL. THIS PERSON'S CLOTHES ARE TOTALLY OUT OF STYLE. BESIDES NOT HAVING A VERY ATTRACTIVE HAIRCUT, THE HAIR IS UNCOMBED AND VERY OILY. THERE IS A FROWN ON THE FACE, DIRT ON THE HANDS AND POOR POSTURE IN THE BODY. THE SHOE LACES ARE UNTIED AND ONE SOCK IS MISSING.

DIRECTIONS: IF YOU AGREE THAT APPEARANCE HAS NOTHING AT ALL TO DO WITH HUMAN VALUE, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTIVE WORDS WOULD BE INACCURATE?

x NERD	x SCUZZ
____ DIFFERENT	____ INTERESTING
x WEIRD	____ OUT OF STYLE
____ UNIQUE	x FLAKE
x CREEP	____ DISHEVELED

EXPLANATION: Certainly it depends on the persons in the group, but this exercise often brings out the "judgmental beast" in some members. Take the opportunity to discuss the phenomenon. Personal sharings are often beneficial and enlightening. The following may be a useful example:

PRESENTER: "I am generally a pretty accepting person and I strongly believe in the concepts of this program. But there are occasions when I weaken and try hard to practice a little sorcery and reduce people from their innate (or natural) human goodness to something far less.

For example, when I drive a car I often get very competitive. I don't like anyone to infringe on my driving space, hold up my speed or cause me inconvenience without very good cause. I know that sounds childish but so is the belief in magic or sorcery. When it happens (I follow someone in a 30 MPH zone who is doing 20) I become irate and bring out my best magic. With great hope and anticipation (to say nothing of revenge) I yell, "TURKEY!" or "CREEP!" or some other such curse designed to transform them from human to something much less. This is in punishment for what they have done to me. And what have they done to me? In the car, locked in traffic, I sometimes feel powerless. In that powerless state I don't experience my own goodness. I blame that on the other person and I attempt to retaliate by reducing the person from a beautiful human being with two tons of human worth to a "Turkey" worth .89 cents a pound.

So when we attack someone's Human Value by calling them de-humanizing names, it's because we experience times when we feel reduced.

I'd like to hear some comments about that from you. Does it make sense? Do you ever practice sorcery? Have you ever felt reduced? What did you do? Etc."

EXPLANATION: The use of dehumanizing words ("Nerd", "Dip", "Turkey", etc.) reflect the belief that we can be made less valuable

by appearance and performance.

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: ADVERTISEMENTS

THE MESSAGE: USE OF THE PRODUCT WILL NOT ONLY MAKE ME A "WINNER", BUT ALSO A BETTER HUMAN BEING.

EXPLANATION: Choose several selected advertisements from magazines or newspapers that suggest that use of a particular product will not only serve the intended purpose but also increase value as a human being. Ads about deodorants, cosmetics, cigarettes and weight loss programs are especially given to this kind of promise. Cut them out and present them to the group with a statement like:

PRESENTER: "This deodorant company is offering you more than just freedom from body odor. What else are they offering?

That's right. They are also offering you increased human value. How do they suggest that can be done?"

EXPLANATION: The subtle suggestion of these advertisements, sometimes not so subtle, is that it's bad to have body odor and, therefore, anyone who does is also bad (is of less value). So, it doesn't just "take the worry out of being close" it also takes the worry out of being thought of as a worthless human being because you don't smell so good.

Keep this presentation light and fun. Get the group involved. Encourage everyone to offer their interpretations of the ads and the messages behind the ads. Some of the comments may be silly but then so are most ads. When all the dust has settled be sure there is an awareness of these two ideas:

(1) One of the strongest supporters of the belief that "You are no better than you appear" is the advertising industry. Not only is that one of the places this belief is learned, it is perhaps the strongest source of sustaining that nonsense belief. Know (and "No!") your enemy.

(2) It is impossible to improve your value

by improving your appearance. A person who doesn't look very good is not a Nogoodnik; he is just not very good looking.

PRESENTER: "In your notebook on Page 3 write on the space provided the message you think the advertisers are trying to get across. Let's share ideas first. Any thoughts about the message?" (Note: Be sure the group understands the two-pronged message -- not only better appearance but also a better human being.)

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: PERSONAL USE

ARE THERE ANY PRODUCTS YOU HAVE USED, OR ARE USING, TO NOT ONLY IMPROVE YOUR APPEARANCE BUT TO MAKE YOU A BETTER HUMAN BEING?

(NAME OF PRODUCT)

PRESENTER: "The next question in your notebook on Page 4 asks if there are any products you use to improve your appearance AND your human value. Take a minute to consider that and then write in either the product name or "There are none."

Before you write anything, are there any comments? Anyone willing to share his or her secret?" (Note: Press for sharing but don't insist on it. Some honest sharing on your part may entice the group to open up and tell the real reason they wear Brand X tennis shoes, i.e., to achieve greater Human Value through group acceptance. A personal sharing might go something like this. "I did smoke cigarettes several years ago. I started because I thought it was a real cool thing to do and I thought I'd look real cool. We all know it's not a very big step from 'looking cool' to 'being cool'. Right? I can remember smoking my first cigarette and feeling really cool. I'm talking far out! I was transformed!") The emphasis of the sharing is on the belief that looking is being. Have fun with it.

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: HUMAN VALUE CONTEST OR BEAUTY CONTEST?

MY CRITERIA FOR ATTRACTIVE:

1. AGE
2. BODY SIZE
3. HAIR -- OR LACK OF HAIR

MY CRITERIA FOR HUMAN VALUE:

1. (NONE)
2. (NONE)
3. (NONE)

EXPLANATION: The purpose of this activity is to get the group to see how they willingly take the step from "not attractive" to "not worthwhile" and they do it without a challenging thought. Here is how to do the activity.

Tear out pictures from a magazine (preferably full-page pictures that can be seen from the back of the room) which present people in pairs. For example, one picture would be an extremely attractive person, the other an extremely unattractive person. Other pairs might be: overweight/"just right", young/very old, bushy hair/bald, etc. The presentation might go like this.

PRESENTER: "We're going to have a contest. I'm going to show you some pairs of pictures. We'll vote on which one of the two you prefer. Be honest and give your real opinions. The winners will go over here and the losers will go over here (pin the pictures up high on either side of you as they are selected).

Here's the first pair of pictures. Tell me which of the two you like better -- this lady or this lady? O.K. She's the winner and she's the loser. Now look at this pair. Which of these two do you most prefer?"

(STUDENT: "I don't know what criteria we're supposed to use to choose the best one.")

"Great comment! For right now we won't be concerned with a criteria but rather your personal preference. O.K. Here's the next."

(When all the pairs have been shown and chosen . . .) "These are the winners and these over here are the losers, by your choice. We didn't seem to have any trouble making these choices did we? Well it's really no wonder. We're so appearance conscious that we have well established criteria about what's good and what's bad. But that's O.K. There is certainly nothing wrong with knowing what we believe looks good and bad. Right? But tell me, honestly, how many of you also think these people over here on the winners' side are also more valuable human beings? Come on now. I heard your comments and saw the looks on your faces as I showed the pairs. Weren't you making judgments about their Human Value?"

EXPLANATION: Impress the group with the understanding that there is criteria for attractive. We may not always agree (beauty is in the eye of the beholder) but general criteria does exist. However, there is no criteria for evaluating Human Value.

Have the group complete their personal criteria for attractive in the notebook. Ask for sharing of their criteria to see if there is any common agreement. Then ask for sharing of their criteria for Human Value. Of course, there is none. Point out the difference between words like "unattractive" and "pig", or "carelessly dressed" and "Nerd". Explain the difference between an objective observer and a subjective name caller. Ask: "What effect does my SELF image have on the way I see others?"

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: ABNORMAL APPEARING PEOPLE

WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF THE "HUMAN RACE?"

<u>NOBODY WON. IT WAS A TIE.</u>

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM THIS ACTIVITY?

<u>DIFFERENT IS NOT WORSE OR BETTER. IT IS</u>

JUST DIFFERENT.

DO YOU HAVE BODY CHARACTERISTICS YOU WOULD CHANGE?

_____

WHY? WHAT GOAL WOULD THIS HELP YOU ACHIEVE?

_____

EXPLANATION: Present pictures of abnormal appearing people. The Guinness Book of World Records is one source. Show them pictures of the world's fattest person, the world's tallest, Siamese twins, etc. The introduction of this activity might go like this.

PRESENTER: "I'm going to show you some pictures of abnormal appearing people. Notice I didn't say 'Abnormal People'. I said 'Abnormal APPEARING People'. The difference is in their appearance. As I show you the pictures, I want to hear what you honestly think."

EXPLANATION: Following the presentation of each picture, ask the students to honestly share their judgments and opinions about these people. Words like "Freak" and "Weird" may come out. Make the point that different appearance does not a non-human make. "Freak" is at best a classification as a sub-human and at worst a disqualification from the human race altogether.

Is it really possible to disqualify or be disqualified from the human race, i.e., to have no Human Value? That's the question to let them tangle with. Different? Yes. Special? Maybe. Excluded? Not a chance.

Finish this activity by answering the notebook questions together.

PRESENTER: "So who won the human race?

That's right. No one won and no one is winning. Fill in the answer in your notebook, on Page 5.

What have you learned from this activity? I want to hear. Tell me.

Good. Different is different and that's it.

Take a minute and fill in the next blank if there are any body characteristics you would change -- your size, your hair, your shoe size, your teeth, anything. Then fill in the following space by explaining what goal this would help you achieve. We won't discuss this unless someone volunteers. Just to give you an idea, I'll volunteer. The body characteristic I'd change is to lose some weight -- about 30 pounds. My goal is to be healthier and more attractive -- since I'm getting older and the extra pounds are a strain on my heart and slender seems to be in style.

Would anyone else like to volunteer?"

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: GUEST(S)

EXPLANATION: Invite people who are different in appearance to speak to your group. People with physical differences due to injury or birth defect, people who dress radically different due to culture, religion or personal preference are a couple of examples. Ask the guest(s) to talk frankly about their differences and encourage the group to question them freely.

The point of this activity is, of course, to reinforce the notion that different is not less, it is different -- pure and simple. Appearance may limit behaviors and affect goals but it does not change Human Value.

PRESENTER: "I have invited a person(s) to speak to you about being different, that is different in appearance. Please feel free to ask questions as he explains what this difference means to him." (Note: obviously it will be necessary to "prep" your guest(s) so they are aware of your objective. Any comments they can make about the foolish belief that "different means less" will be helpful. How have they dealt with that belief in themselves? How do they deal with that belief by others?)

BE CREATIVE: Any other ideas how to teach this insight? How about being a little risky

and dressing really clutzy looking one day and not say a word about it? See what kind of response you get from the group. Discuss how you felt, how they felt and what sort of judgments were made about the "new" you.

INSIGHT #3: THERE IS MORE TO ME THAN MEETS THE EYE. I HAVE A VISIBLE, PUBLIC SELF THAT CAN BE OBSERVED, CRITICIZED AND APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED. ALSO, I HAVE AN INVISIBLE, PRIVATE SELF THAT IS PERFECT AND UNAVAILABLE TO ANYONE EXCEPT WHEN I CHOOSE TO LET SOMEONE IN.

Explanation of the Insight

The last two chapters focused on behavior and appearance. These two observable characteristics make up a part of our SELF that is visible and public. "Public" is applicable and descriptive of this portion of our SELF in that this part of us is open to others and often maintained for others. This is why we are admonished to "look our best", "do our best", and to "put our best foot forward". Our Public SELF is open to criticism, both invited and uninvited, both positive and negative, both from our SELF and from others. It is with this part of our SELF that we are most familiar and in which we often (and mistakenly) place our Human Value. A sense of worthlessness invades us when we believe our value is invested in our performance and appearance and we fail to meet the standard.

Be an observer of your SELF and others and see the frequent striving for perfection, the anger at defeat, the unrequested explanations of failures, the hesitancy to acknowledge compliments on performance and appearance. It's really no wonder having grown up with such sage advice as: "Anything worth doing is worth doing well." "I don't care what grades you get as long as you try your best." "You only go around once so grab as much as you can." "Always put your best foot forward." "Try to look your very best." No wonder we grow up such neurotics. Our value as a human being is focused on good performance and good appearance. Recognition of a broader sense of SELF (an unconditional acceptance of SELF) is infrequent or absent altogether. I'm not saying that it is foolish or impossible to try to behave maximally and look optimally. At times it may even be highly desirable. What I am suggesting is that it would be a good idea, since we are not perfect in all things, to allow for error, backsliding, changing and sometimes, simply the choice to do and look our very average. . . our very worst, even?

Our Public SELF is tangible, observable, can be poked at and will never, never be perfect no matter how much we may want that to be so. This Public SELF, thank God, or thank evolution (depending on your orientation), is changeable. It can be better or worse depending on your particular "gifts" and motivations. In terms of our Public SELF we are not all equal. Some have greater athletic ability, intellectual strength, esthetic features or any of a thousand other performance and/or appearance characteristics than others have. That's just the way it is. We are different. The problem, however, is not with the difference. The problem ("the challenge" is a healthier view) is to learn to live contently (free from useless anxiety) with your difference as well as everyone else's. Not a very easy challenge but certainly

possible for those who choose to do so. (A system for doing this is presented in Part II.)

In addition to learning to live contently with differences, SELF acceptance comes with a recognition and appreciation of the Total SELF. There is a tendency to give our perfect, Private SELF (the essence of our Human Value) an insignificant or obsucre glance as we do a SELF evaluation. This is understandable since our Private SELF is more illusive than our Public SELF. It's not obvious. It can't be seen. We only see manifestations of it -- a tear of sadness, a tear of joy, a subtle smile, a hardy laugh, a billowing anger and so on. It can't be touched though we have all felt its presence.

This part of our SELF is our perfection. This is "Me" which cannot be criticized or made better. This is the innermost SELF that is experienced by others only at our will. If you and I played golf together and I played (performed) very well, you could observe my Public SELF in action. You could share that part of my SELF. Also you could have observed the manifestations of my Private SELF as you listened to my voice tones, saw facial expressions, gestures and perhaps even a twinkle in the eye. You could guess at what this means, at what is going on inside of me -- "You're feeling excited and happy." But unless I choose to "open my SELF up" and let you inside me -- "I want to tell you what I'm feeling" -- yours is only a guess and you have experienced only part of me (my Public performing SELF). It is when we recognize, accept and share this Private SELF of ours as well as our Public SELF that we give our Total SELF. Without this inner, Private SELF we are not complete, whole. Unfortunately we have learned to focus our attention on our Public SELF -- that rascal rebel, that constantly changing vagabond of varying virtue -- and have in the process never really gotten to know, much less appreciate or share, our Private SELF.

The window to our Private SELF is through our feelings. This brings us to a crucial difference between the Public and Private SELF. Our behaviors are open to judgments and criticism: "Very good!" "I liked the way you did that." "Don't ever do that again!" "That was a crummy thing to do!" Our feelings, the manifestations of our inner SELF, are not open to criticism. Feelings cannot be judged. Values cannot be attached to feelings. All feelings are O.K., acceptable. It's O.K. for you to become angry with someone. There is no problem with anger. The problem, or the judgment, enters when you <u>act</u> (behave or perform) on that anger. Your behavior can be judged. I don't think it's <u>right</u> or just or tolerable to slap another person in the face. That's my opinion or judgment about that act, thank you. However, I can't make that same kind of judgment about anger (or any other feeling) saying, "You have no <u>right</u> to be angry." That's nonsense. Feelings are <u>not</u> behaviors about which moral judgments can be made. Feelings are feelings and nothing less.

Because of this important distinction between our Public and Private SELF, it's important to clearly see the difference between judgments or opinions and feelings. When something is judged, an evaluation of it is offered. Judgments come from the head, the mind. So when judging it is accurate to say, "I think," or "I believe," or "It's my opinion." For example, "I think this book is very interesting." These opinions are expressions of one's Public SELF about another's Public SELF. They may be accurate, inaccurate, accepted, rejected, welcomed or revenged. Feelings, on the other hand, are not open to that variety of responses. There is often a confusion between what we believe to be a feeling and what is really a judgment (I suspect it's because the word "feeling" allows for more intimacy and/or it allows for freedom from the responsibility for the judgment -- "Oh well. It was just a feeling anyway."). An example of this confusion: "I feel that this book is very interesting." Nope! Wrong! You can't feel a book is interesting." You can believe it is interesting. You can judge it to be interesting. In your opinion it may be interesting. But never in a thousand tries can it be a feeling. Feelings are inward expressions reflecting the Inner SELF. Opinions are outward expressions reflecting the Outer SELF. "I feel interested." That's what is going on inside of me. "I believe the book is interesting." That's what I believe is going on inside the book. Feelings are accurately an expression of our Inner SELF when the word "feel" is immediately followed by a feeling: "I feel happy." "I feel sad." "I feel energized." "I feel confused." Do you feel confused? Is this concept still not clear? If you are saying to your SELF, "I feel that this concept is confusing," you have missed the distinction. If you are saying, "I feel confused," you probably understand and are not confused at all (Catch 22?).

Judgments come from our Public, perceiving SELF. Feelings come from our Private, emoting SELF. Judgments come from the head. Feelings come from the heart. To say, "I feel confused" is to offer an intimate, honest, non-judgmental sharing of whom you are at that moment. What you are saying is, "If you could take a peek inside of me, you would see that I am confused. That is the me I want you to know right now. Please accept me without judgment or condition."

So you see, this Inner, Private SELF of ours is very real and needs to be recognized as a marvelous part of our Total SELF. It is the intimate part of us and can only be shared with others when we choose to do so. "Hey, you look confused." "No. I'm not confused." "Well what are you then?" The choice as to whether to share your Private SELF or not is yours... "I'm frightened."

The purpose of this Insight is to develop an awareness of our Total SELF: A Public Self that acts in many different ways, looks different than anyone else and still changes appearance frequently and is open to comment and criticism; and a Private SELF that is manifested through feelings, is perfect and unchanging in value and is never open to criticism or judgment.

The goal is to learn to accept criticism and judgments as opinions of our Public SELF -- not our Total SELF. These judgments may or may not be accepted as true. But true or not, others' opinions do not, cannot, change our Human Value because that is above criticism.

Suggested Activities/Exercises and a Model for Presentation

(NOTEBOOK) INSIGHT #3: THERE IS MORE TO ME THAN MEETS THE EYE. I HAVE A VISIBLE, PUBLIC SELF THAT CAN BE OBSERVED, CRITICIZED AND APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED. ALSO, I HAVE AN INVISIBLE, PRIVATE SELF THAT IS PERFECT AND UNAVAILTO ANYONE EXCEPT WHEN I CHOOSE TO LET SOMEONE IN.

PRESENTER: "In your notebook on Page 5 is the word 'Insight #3.' On the spaces provided, please copy the insight as I write it on the board.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: MY VISIBLE, IMPERFECT, PUBLIC SELF HAS TWO OBSERVABLE AND JUDGEABLE CHARACTERISTICS:

1. PERFORMANCE
2. APPEARANCE (BODY CHARACTERISTICS)

MY INVISIBLE, PERFECT, PRIVATE SELF IS INTANGIBLE AND IS EXPRESSED THROUGH MY:

FEELINGS

EXPLANATION: Use this Exercise as an explanation of the Insight. Clearly focus on the SELF as having two parts, each with distinct characteristics.

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: DESCRIBE A PERSON

PERSON: _____

THE ABOVE DESCRIPTION TELLS ONLY HALF THE STORY ABOUT WHO THIS PERSON IS. WHICH HALF?

THE VISIBLE, IMPERFECT, PUBLIC SELF

DESCRIBE THE OTHER SELF:

WONDERFUL _____

BEAUTIFUL _____

LOVEABLE _____

EXPLANATION: The purpose of this Activity is to demonstrate that there is more to our SELF than meets the eye. A visible description tells only part of the story -- and not necessarily the best part.

Select a well-known person to describe. It may be a popular personality, it may be you (not that you couldn't be the popular personality) or it may be simply a person known to the entire group. Ask the group to describe the selected person as fully as possible, writing each description on the lines in their notebook (P. 5) as you write them on the board. When the task is completed, discuss the activity and include these points:

1. Each descriptive word(s) can be classified as either behavioral or a body characteristic -- Public SELF. There are no descriptive words about the Private SELF. (Note: It is possible, but not likely, that words like "happy" or "sad" or "angry" may be used. These, of course, are feelings and do disclose the existence of an Inner SELF. They don't, however, describe the Inner SELF. Rather, we observe behaviors that suggest the person is experiencing happiness.)

2. Not everyone sees the same characteristics in the same person. In fact, some may even see opposite characteristics. (Don't pass up this chance to point out how subjective our evaluation of others can be.)

3. Only our Outer, Public SELF can be observed, described and evaluated. Our Inner, Private SELF is only made evident through feelings. In the absence of any observations on which to base a description of the Inner SELF, the following words are boldly suggested: WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL AND LOVEABLE.

The following is an example of how the "Description of a Person" might look:

Person: Bob Hanel

6' tall	(A)	Funny	(B)
Has a beard	(A)	Nice looking	(A)
Nice	(B)	Husky	(A)
Smiles a lot	(A)	Funny looking	(A)
A counselor	(B)	Is busy	(B)
Overweight	(A)	Says "Hi!" a lot	(B)

Note: "A" - Appearance "B" - Behavior

PRESENTER: "Let's look at our list. All these descriptions can be placed into one or the other of the two characteristics of our Public SELF. What are they? Right. Behavior and Appearance. Let's go through the list and put a "B" by all the behavioral characteristics and an "A" by all the appearance or body characteristics. What's 6' tall? Right. That's a body characteristic. (Proceed through the list.)

It looks like we don't all agree exactly on how to describe Bob. Is he "husky" or "overweight"? Is he "nice looking' or "funny looking"? "Funny" or "Crazy"? It really doesn't matter for two reasons:

(1) We're sharing opinions which can be easily changed and (2) "Husky" or "Overweight" it makes no important difference because while it may have some bearing on his health, it won't change his Human Worth one ounce."

(STUDENT: "What about the word 'Nice'? Doesn't that describe his Private SELF?")

"It seems like it, doesn't it? But 'nice' is a description of how he behaves; it's a way of acting. So it describes his Public SELF. That, by the way, is the answer to the question found below the description. Write 'Outer, Public SELF' in the blank.

The next exercise in your notebook is to describe the 'other half', the Inner SELF. That's kind of tough. Most of you probably didn't even know you had one. The focus is on our behavior and appearance and our Inner SELF just gets pushed to the background. It's so intangible it gets rather poor reviews from the people critics. To make it more concrete we've given it two tons of Human Value even though we know the value is infinite. To make it more perceptible (visible)

in spite of its invisible character we'll describe our Private SELF as WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL AND LOVEABLE. Take a few seconds and write those words in the blanks. From now on, when I ask you to describe your SELF, besides your visible characteristics, also include those three words, 'I'm wonderful, beautiful and loveable'. Come on. Let's say it altogether once, 'I'M WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL AND LOVEABLE'."

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: IF I WANTED TO IMPROVE MY VISIBLE, IMPERFECT, PUBLIC SELF, I COULD

PRACTICE

IF I WANTED TO IMPROVE MY INVISIBLE, PERFECT, PRIVATE SELF, I COULD

NOT

EXPLANATION: The Public SELF can often be changed if that's desirable, but the responsibility rests with each individual. Some find dissatisfaction with their performance and appearance and, rather than seeing change as a challenge, slip into an irresponsible "Woe is me" attitude. This is unproductive and SELF defeating. We have at least two choices when we are not satisfied with our Public SELF: (1) Learn to accept our SELF as we are. (2) If possible, change through practice. Practice does not make perfect but it does usually make better. This practice applies to appearance also: practice new cosmetic techniques, practice new eating habits, practice exercises, etc.

The Private SELF is, of course, perfect. It cannot be changed or improved -- only recognized and appreciated.

Have the group complete the exercise by filling in the blanks on Page 5 of the notebook.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: WHAT I LIKE AND DISLIKE ABOUT MY VISIBLE SELF

LIKES	DISLIKES
_____	_____
_____	_____

EXPLANATION: Be prepared to lead the way on this exercise, i.e., "What I like about my SELF is . . ."

Be bold. Be a model. Be a truth sayer. Let it be known that it's O.K. to say nice things about your SELF. "I'm nice looking." "I'm a good teacher."

This may be an excellent time to point out the difference between "SELF appreciation" and "bragging". SELF appreciation is recognizing a personal quality that you enjoy, are happy to have, are proud of, etc., but realize that the quality does not change your value as a human being (it may change your value as a performing being, however.). SELF appreciation is a non-comparative statement. Bragging, to the contrary, is an attempt to establish your value in your eyes and the eyes of others by pointing out performance and appearance assets. It is based on the belief that Human Value is proportionately related to performance and appearance. The braggart usually attempts to diminish the value of others by criticism of their Public SELF. He believes it is possible to do so. Bragging is a comparative statement.

Ask for verbal examples of SELF Appreciation versus Bragging. ("I'm the best dancer around here." vs. "I can dance very well.")

Have the group write in their two "likes" before moving on to the "dislikes". Again, take the lead.

"What I dislike about my SELF is I'm overweight and I'm not as intelligent as I would like to be." Point out that recognizing what we consider our deficits is nonproductive and SELF defeating <u>if</u> we see them as diminishing our worth. It's much more productive to see our dislikes as <u>goals</u>, i.e., "I'm going to lose 25 pounds." and "I'm going to read more to increase my awareness."

Have the group write in two dislikes. As a discussion question, ask the group which characteristics were easier to write, the likes or the dislikes? Most find it easy to list likes. Why is that do you suppose?

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: A DRAWING OF MY PRIVATE INNER SELF

ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE DRAW A "PICTURE" OF YOUR INNER SELF. SINCE YOU HAVE NEVER SEEN THAT PART OF YOU, YOU WILL HAVE TO

USE WORDS: WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL, LOVEABLE.

EXPLANATION: In the preparation for this exercise have your group bring colored pencils, felt pens, crayons, paints, etc. so a truly BEAUTIFUL, WONDERFUL, AND LOVEABLE SELF can be drawn.

Somewhere on the "drawing" have them insert the title, This Is Me.

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: INSULTS, OPINIONS, JUDGMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

DID THE PERSON INSULTED RESPOND OR REACT?

RESPONDED

WHY?

THE PERSON DID NOT BELIEVE THAT INSULTS CAN CHANGE HUMAN VALUE. THEY ARE ONLY ANOTHER'S OPINION.

AN EXAMPLE OF AN INSULT: "YOU LOOK FUNNY."

AN AGGRESSIVE REACTION: "WELL SO DO YOU."

AN ASSERTIVE RESPONSE: "I DON'T AGREE."

EXPLANATION: This activity has a certain element of risk, but if you believe in what you're selling and willing to practice what you preach, it's a very useful way to demonstrate the concept.

Allow your SELF to be criticized in front of the group. Assure the person criticizing that it is O.K. to really "lay it on you" and, if necessary, insults can be made up.

It may be necessary for you to set an example by insulting the group. Be sure to say something complimentary in addition to the insults. The reason for this is explained in the following narration.

PRESENTER: "O.K. We're going to play a kind of a game but more accurately I'm going to model for you a better way to respond to insults -- those sticky, prickly comments we all receive from time to time.

On Page 6 of your notebook write the word 'Insults' in the blank by 'Activity'. After 'Insults', write 'Opinions', 'Judgments' and 'Evaluations'. That's what insults really are.

I told you that our Public SELF, our behavior and appearance, is open to criticism. I want you to understand that it is O.K. for people to criticize you. More accurately, it's harmless. Their criticism does nothing to change your value as a human being. They are simply sharing their opinion of your Public SELF. You have a choice as to whether to agree or disagree with that opinion. Your Human Value is unchangeable. No matter what anyone says about you, you remain WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL AND LOVEABLE. It's because we have been led to believe that we can be made less by insults, that we get defensive and aggressive. We all practiced our aggressive comments even though they are usually pretty ineffective: "Oh Ya! Well your mother wears combat boots!" "Turkey!" "I didn't know the meaning of the word 'Ugly' until I met you." And of course, there's the advice our parents give us as a defense against teasing, "Just ignore them." That usually doesn't work too well either. Let's try a different approach. Let's practice an <u>assertive response</u>.

I need a volunteer. O.K., Tom. I want you to criticize me, insult me, tease me. Use any of the unpleasant comments you have received or given. Also, give me a few compliments. It's not that I can't handle the negative comments but I want you to understand that we often don't accept compliments much better than insults. Compliments, like insults, are opinions of another's Public SELF. Think of compliments as a gift. If you say, "Oh that's not true," it's like refusing a gift. The appropriate, assertive response is, "Thank you."

O.K., Tom, fire away. Tell me how I look, how I do my job, anything. Can you do it?"

(STUDENT: "I'm not sure what to say.")

"Give me the insults and compliments that we hear around here every day. You might say something like: "Good grief! Where did you get those clothes? Nothing matches!" or "Getting a little heavy around the middle, aren't you?" or "You're my favorite teacher," or "You're very attractive." Got the idea? Don't be afraid to attack me. It's O.K. I like who I am even with all my faults. I know I'm not perfect -- at least in behavior

and appearance. I know that no matter what you say I will still be WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL AND LOVEABLE. O.K., Tom? Let's have it."

(STUDENT: "Where did you get your clothes? From Goodwill?")

"I can understand you thinking that. These clothes are a bit worn. I don't remember where I bought them."

(STUDENT: "A bit worn! You look terrible. Look at those boots. They're shot.")

"I'd have to agree that the boots are a little tired looking but they're very comfortable. I don't agree that I 'look terrible'. I think I look rather nice today."

(STUDENT: "That's your opinion. Why don't you change your hair style? No wonder you look so old.")

"I think you're right. It is time for a change but I'm not sure I can afford to have my hair styled. I appreciate your comment."

(STUDENT: "Actually I really like the way you look. I just said those things.")

"Thank you, Tom."

(STUDENT: "But you know what? I think you're the worst teacher in the school.")

"I appreciate your frankness. I'll take your opinion under advisement. It would help me if you could be specific."

EXPLANATION: Before leaving this activity be sure to have a summary discussion with the group. The following are examples of discussion starters and will help in completing the written part of the activity in the notebook.

(1) "Why didn't I get angry at Tom when he insulted me?" (Some will insist that it was because you knew Tom didn't mean it. Insist in return that it is possible to assertively respond like this even if the insults are real.)

(2) "Can my value as a human being be changed by Tom -- or anyone else for that matter?"

(3) "Is it possible to assertively respond to insults in real life situations?"

(4) "Why do we often aggressively attack back when we are insulted?"

(5) "Why do we often get embarrassed when complimented?"

You may want to make this a regular activity with either you or a group member giving insults and compliments to a volunteer. Many will feel uncomfortable, embarrassed and silly at first. Stick with it. This is an important skill to learn. While practice probably won't make perfect, it can certainly make better.

A suggestion: You may want to practice your assertive responses to insults before you present this activity in front of the group. You will find the key to success is honesty rather than memorizing some standard responses. If someone says you acted like a fool and you did, then agree. If someone says you are a fool, disagree and correct them with something like, "While I may have acted foolishly I am still a wonderful human being." If someone tells you you are looking a little fat and you are, agree and perhaps add, "Thank you for your concerned observation." If someone tells you your new outfit looks like a bad joke but you like it, simply and assertively disagree. Get the idea?

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: FEELINGS ARE THE MANIFESTATIONS OF MY INNER, PRIVATE, PERFECT SELF. FEELINGS CANNOT BE JUDGED. LIKE MY INVISIBLE SELF, ALL FEELINGS ARE ALWAYS ACCEPTABLE.

OPINIONS AND JUDGMENTS ARE THE PRODUCT OF MY OUTER, PUBLIC, IMPERFECT SELF. THEY ARE BASED ON MY EXPERIENCES AND BELIEFS. UNLIKE FEELINGS, THEY MAY OR MAY NOT BE RIGHT.

EXPLANATION: Write the above definitions on the board to be copied by the group in the notebooks. Discuss the definitions. Use the information provided in the Explanation of the Insight.

The distinction between feelings and opinions is an important one. Take time to make sure the distinction is understood.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: OPINIONS/JUDGMENTS VS. FEELINGS

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION ABOUT HOMEWORK?

I THINK (IT IS HARD.)

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT HOMEWORK?

I FEEL (WORRIED.)

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION ABOUT THIS COURSE?

I THINK (IT IS FUN.)

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS COURSE?

I FEEL (EXCITED.)

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION ABOUT _____?

I THINK _____

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT _____?

I FEEL _____

EXPLANATION: Use this exercise to bring out at least these two points:

(1) A feeling is expressed in three words -- "I feel pleased." "I feel that . . ." does not express a feeling but an opinion.

(2) Opinions may or may not be wrong. Arguments can be presented to the contrary. Feelings cannot be refuted or disputed ("That's not how you feel," or "You shouldn't feel that way.") A feeling may be unpleasant or not desirable, but all feelings are acceptable.

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: THE FEELING GAME

DID YOU GET TO ACT OUT A FEELING? (YES)

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT? (EMBARRASSED)

ARE THERE RIGHT OR WRONG FEELINGS? (NO)

FEELINGS ARE A MANIFESTATION OF (INNER SELF)

EXPLANATION: Provide a variety of examples which likely would illicit strong emotional responses from your group. The purpose of this game is to develop a greater awareness of feelings.

The game goes like this: Ask for a volunteer.

The volunteer comes to the front of the group. You describe a situation and the volunteer secretly writes down her probable emotional response. Then she acts out the feeling and the rest of the group tries to guess what it is. In some cases the group will not guess the feeling. The point to make is that unless we are allowed (privileged) to know another's feeling, the best we can do is guess who they are at that moment. No one gets into another's Private SELF unless invited.

Examples of situations:

(1) "The office just called and the principal wants to see you right away. How would you feel about that?"

(2) "Your parents have just announced they are taking a week's vacation in Southern California and you will be staying at home with relatives. How do you feel about that?"

(3) "A friend of yours gives you his very expensive camera. Later you find out from someone else that it was stolen. How do you feel about that?"

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: CIRCLE THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE

	TO JUDGE OR NOT TO JUDGE		
HE FEELS ANGRY.	RIGHT	WRONG	NEITHER
SO, HE THROWS A ROCK THROUGH A WINDOW.	RIGHT	WRONG	NEITHER
SHE FEELS EMBARRASSED.	RIGHT	WRONG	NEITHER
SO, SHE RUNS INTO THE RESTROOM AND NEVER COMES OUT.	RIGHT	WRONG	NEITHER
HE FEELS GENEROUS.	RIGHT	WRONG	NEITHER
SO, HE GIVES FRIENDS $100.00 OF HIS FATHER'S MONEY.	RIGHT	WRONG	NEITHER
SHE FEELS SILLY.	RIGHT	WRONG	NEITHER
SO, SHE WEARS HER CLOTHES BACKWARDS.	RIGHT	WRONG	NEITHER

WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THIS EXERCISE?

WHAT WE DO AND HOW WE LOOK CAN BE JUDGED.
FEELINGS CANNOT BE JUDGED.

EXPLANATION: Use this exercise to demonstrate that while behavior and appearance can be judged, feelings cannot. There may be some disagreement about the rightness or wrongness of the behaviors but the feelings are always O.K.

INSIGHT #4: WHEN I DON'T LIKE MY SELF, IT'S BECAUSE NONSENSE (MONSTER) BELIEFS KEEP ME FROM SEEING MY WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL, LOVEABLE SELF.

SELF acceptance is the key to a peaceful, satisfying and happy existence. We each have our own view of the world and it reflects back to us an image of who we are. If that image is favorable -- "GREAT!" If that image is not favorable -- "GROAN." There is nothing complicated or magical about this. If my focus is on my performance and/or how I look, I am forced to prove my value. If my focus is on an internal and unchanging goodness, I will believe in my value no matter what.

As I prepare the material for this book, the level of SELF acceptance I experience is dependent on what part of my SELF I see most clearly. If this book is a performance (if I'm focusing on my Public SELF) and my purpose is to win acclaim and thereby prove my value, I'm going to experience a lot of anxiety. I have placed my worth not in my own hands (trusting in my innate goodness) but in you, the readers' hands. In effect I would be asking for validation of my goodness, my value, through your approval of my performance. On the other hand, if the preparation of this book is an act of love, a giving with no strings attached ("I hope you enjoy it and find it helpful but if you don't that's O.K., too.") my SELF acceptance will not be changed no matter what your response.

This insight helps me to realize I have a choice. It's my decision as to where I want to focus and how I want to feel about my SELF. If I do experience anxiety I know it is not some monstrous force beyond my control but rather an inaccurate perception of my SELF.

The SELF, as it has been presented in the previous insights, has two entities -- Public and Private. Together these two entities make a whole person. The purpose of this insight is to create an awareness that SELF acceptance is a choice and this choice can best be understood and acted on when the perception of SELF is clear. The purpose is not to deny the importance of the Public SELF, but to say, "It's not that important." Goals are important but they don't establish and/or guarantee Human Value. The purpose is not to establish the Private SELF as all important, but to say, "It's the most important and the uniquely distinguishing part."

A positive SELF image results when there is a realization that goodness is a given and not something that has to be earned. We lose sight of that goodness when nonsense (monster) beliefs get in the way and block the view of our WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL, LOVEABLE SELF.

There is a song by Johnny Nash called I Can See Clearly Now. The opening words are: "I can see clearly now, the rain has gone; I can see all obstacles in my way. Gone are the dark clouds that had me blind. It's gonna be a bright, bright sunshiny day." Our WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL, LOVEABLE (WBL) SELF has

always been there but through our development "obstacles", foolish beliefs, monster madness have gotten in our way. This program does not claim the power to create a "bright, bright sun-shiny day", but rather to help participants recognize some of their obstacles and explain how it is possible to choose to set them aside. It is then that we can see clearly into our SELF.

All the obstacles to our SELF that we carry with us have been "inherited". We didn't come by them naturally. We learned them, or were given them, by a variety of persons and experiences that have influenced our lives. The most significant giver is the parent(s). This giving is often subtle and usually with no harm intended. Sometimes it is even intended "for your own good." When what we have learned is recognized as an obstacle obstructing our view of our WBL SELF, when it's a monster telling us our goodness must be earned it is best attacked and gotten rid of.

Before we mount the assault, it may be useful to see how this monster menagerie comes to be. The following is not intended as a scientific explanation but rather as an uncomplicated, personal sharing as to how this "inheritance" can happen. Almost immediately after my wife, Julie, and I were married she became pregnant. We were excited but hardly prepared. Our first born was a boy and as new parents we were filled with fear (joy, excitement, amazement were present too, but fear was there in abundance) as secretly, and not so secretly, we asked ourselves, "Can we do it? Can we properly take care of this fragile little rascal?" We wondered and there was doubt in our empty response. His name was Gary and his first introduction to the people he would come to know as Mom and Dad was a fumbling, stumbling, doubt-filled pair. We believed we were ill-prepared for the <u>responsibility</u> (not the baby) before us and feared we would not be very good at it if we were any judge and, of course, we chose to be. So Gary began life with two people who were tight as a tick because they feared they couldn't <u>do it just right</u> . . . and we hadn't even left the hospital yet. That's part of the inheritance we already were bequeathing to this newborn: "Be right! Stumbling and fumbling, even in love, just ain't good enough."

Gary was born prematurely and was jaundiced. When I first saw him he was tiny (5½ lbs.) and rather discolored. The nurse brought him to me wrapped in a blanket. My first sight of him was when she pulled back the blanket and said, "It's a boy." At that moment I was relieved he was healthy, proud he was our baby, but disappointed that he was . . . well . . . unpleasant looking. I asked about his health, just to double check, and was assured that after a week or two he would increase in stature, his color would be normal and we would have a baby to be proud of. ("Weren't you proud of him like he was?") Quite frankly, no.

I could hardly wait for the little guy to "grow up and blossom" so he would look like and act like the baby I had imagined him to be -- cute, active, always doing cute things. I watched him

carefully for I knew this was a child of great potential that was burning to get out and I wanted to see it. He would do even better than a "chip off the old block." Meanwhile, while waiting for the potential to develop, we just watched and loved him for he could do no wrong. If he threw his bottle out of the crib we said, "That's cute" and lovingly retrieved it for him. When he was old enough to sit in his high chair to eat we were very pleased and took great pleasure in all that he did. If he chose to knock his cereal bowl on the floor, we laughed and took a picture of it. If he refused to eat, Julie played the airplane game with him where his mouth was the hangar, "Here comes the airplane, Gary. RRRRRRRRRR. Open the hangar and let it in." Our patience was nearly unlimited. Patience, unconditional love and acceptance described us well. I was still anticipating potential greatness, but for now I loved him just as he was. I'm sure at that time, in the little recording room of his mind, he was making a tape that played, "I'm good. I'm valuable. I'm loved. It's really great to be me. In fact, it's just great to be."

One day, I can't pinpoint when it started, we began criticizing -- judgmentally, not lovingly -- and, very significantly, we criticized Gary and not his behavior. Perhaps it began when he became more ambulatory and therefore more of a bother -- and less of a person. Our love and acceptance became more conditional; it was becoming something to be earned. He began to knock things down. He could throw more food . . . and farther. He took more watching, more time, more energy. "Gary! Stop throwing your food! You be good, now," and "Get away from that lamp! (CRASH!) I told you to be a good boy," and "Be a good little boy for Mama and go right to sleep because Mama's tired." And Gary begins to review his tapes and thinks, "I was wrong. I can't just hang around and be good and valuable and wonderful. I have to earn that. If I do the right thing, then I'm good. Now I get the idea." The inheritance continues to trickle in: "Your purpose is to please others. You will be loved if . . ."

About this time Jennifer was born and a year later, Veronica. Both were just the "right" weight and absolutely beautiful babies -- and their daddy and everyone else said it frequently. "Ah Ha!" says Gary as the inheritance grows. "Not only do I have to do the right thing to be good, I also have to look right. I think my sisters look more right than I do. At least people seem to fuss over them more than me. It must be because they're pretty. I should be pretty, too."

Several friends had babies about the same time we did. I noticed what their kids were doing. I couldn't help (I chose not to?) comparing. I wanted Gary to be doing the same -- or better, even better. What decent father wouldn't want the best for his kid? When we visited, their kids would often be riding vigorously on their tricycles. Gary showed little interest. At best he would push the trike and gleefully watch it roll in all kinds of uncontrolled directions. NOT GOOD ENOUGH! "The boy will have a trike of his own and he will ride it. That's what kids his age do. He's going to love doing it. I know he will." The trike I brought home for Gary was just a little bigger and a little

better than the other kids'. "Gary, come out on the porch. Wait till you see what Daddy got for you." Sure enough. He was thrilled. He started spinning the pedals with his hands to watch them flutter around. He delighted in seeing his reflection in the curved chrome fenders and was amazed at the new shapes he took. He loved to shove it and watch it go aimlessly. "O.K., Gary. Mount up!" I said as I lifted him onto the tricycle. "I don't want to ride it." "Of course you do. It's fun." As he climbed off the tricycle and walked into the house I felt very hurt that he wasn't willing to ride that trike. Our friends' children rode like the wind. I was embarrassed that all he would do was push it. There is no doubt in my mind that right there on that front porch I taught Gary a lesson (gave him more of the inheritance): "If you want to please your Daddy, if you want him to be proud of you, if you want him to be warm and loving, you do things right. That's what life is all about, doing and looking right."

The intent here is not to say that our parents, or anyone else, messed us up. Blaming is non-productive, not a very good use of our energy. What I am sharing is that each of us has received an inheritance. The inheritance is a variety of beliefs about our SELF -- some true and some false. It makes sense to examine those beliefs, challenge them and, those that don't make sense, throw them out. The picture we are trying to create for the participants in this program is that of a WBL SELF that is at least partially hidden behind some monster madness, some foolish beliefs, that have come to be accepted as real and true. In Part II of this program these monsters, these SELF defeating beliefs, will be discussed as "Irrational Beliefs", "Irrational Sentences", "Negative Mottoes for Living", "Words to Live by", etc. More specific information about the ways we tend to upset our SELF and create for our SELF an atmosphere of despair will be given. It is enough at this point to share the insight that we may have incorrectly evaluated our true value because we accepted as true, beliefs about our SELF which are pure nonsense. We will want to be challenging with such questions as: "How do I feel about my SELF when I make a mistake? How do I feel about my SELF when I do something dumb? How do I feel about my SELF when someone tells me, 'You're ugly. You're a pig. No one likes you.'" And on and on and on. Notice the question: "How do I feel . . .?" The question: "What do I think of my SELF when . . ." would reveal different though useful answers. Be sure you, and the participants, clearly understand the difference between "feeling" and "judging" before you present this. It's important to understand that if I feel "awful" when someone calls me a "pig", that's fine (feelings are O.K. There are no right feelings) but it's nonsense to believe, think or judge that because someone calls me a "pig" I can be changed from a beautiful human being into a pig. If we had an accurate perception of our SELF (a human value which is beyond our performance and the way we look and which is always WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL AND LOVEABLE) we would feel confused when someone told us we were a "pig". Or we might feel saddened for the name caller. We would not be defensive. We would not react. While it is possible to act weird, it is not possible to be weird. We can only be WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL AND LOVEABLE.

While it is possible to do something stupid, it is not possible to be stupid. You can only be . . . Well you know. It's possible to lie (a behavior) but it's not possible to be a liar ("You lied!" YES. "You're a liar!" NO.) Our behaviors can be judged. They are judged. Our value as human beings cannot be judged -- even though we all try. "I feel awful." That makes sense. "I am awful." That's nonsense.

Before leaving the explanation of this insight, I think (not "I feel") it is worth mentioning two related insights. First, we are all in the process of becoming. "Becoming" suggests that we are on a journey. We haven't arrived. As we go through the process of becoming, we realize our potential to do, not our potential to be -- that's a given. As we travel our road of becoming we will undoubtedly trip and fall occasionally. It's to be expected. We are, after all, fallible human beings. That's life. Someone once said, "When you're green you're growing; when you're ripe you rot." I like that a lot. When you're becoming you are going to mess up. Sorry but that's the way it is. If you think you have become, you won't grow much. This certainly decreases the chance of error, lessens the risk, but it's not much fun. You will "rot" because you are not in process, you are not moving. However, this whole concept of becoming applies to our Outer SELF. We can become more aware of our Inner SELF, but our Inner SELF has already arrived. Because we have a deeply imbedded vision of our SELF as valued for our performance and our appearance, it is realistic to believe that this view (a becoming doing SELF and a perfect being SELF) will not be easily accepted. The focus of Part I of this program is to invite a challenge to take a fuller view of SELF and see it not as only performance and appearance, but more completely as an inner perfect SELF, which has already arrived and doesn't need to become because it already is . . . WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL and LOVEABLE. I mention this in hopes that it will help in the development of greater SELF acceptance. It may be easier if it is known that we are already more than halfway there. Also, failure in the process of becoming is easier to accept if we can learn to enjoy "being green".

Related to this insight is the insight that we will probably never reach the point of total SELF acceptance. That would be an unrealistic goal. Think of your view of your SELF as one that could be placed on a scale of 0 to 10. "0" is at the bottom as suicidal. "10" is at the top and is total love of SELF (not selfish love but a total appreciation of one's value as a fallible human being with a perfect Inner SELF). No one can consistently be a ten but it's worth the effort to try and get there every day. This scale will be discussed in the following section.

Suggested Activities/Exercises and a Model for Presentation

(NOTEBOOK) INSIGHT #4: WHEN I DON'T LIKE MY SELF, IT'S BECAUSE NONSENSE (MONSTER) BELIEFS KEEP ME FROM SEEING MY WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL, LOVEABLE SELF.

PRESENTER: "In your notebook on Page 8 is the word 'Insight #4'. On the space provided, please copy the insight as I write it on the board."

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: MONSTER MADNESS, NONSENSE BELIEFS, MONSTERS

These are:

ALL THOSE BELIEFS THAT TELL ME I AM NO BETTER THAN WHAT I DO OR HOW I LOOK. THEY ARE BELIEFS THAT PLACE A CONDITION ON THE VALUE OF MY SELF.

EXPLANATION: After a brief discussion of the insight, have the participants offer definitions of the terms MONSTER MADNESS, ETC. Then require that a definition be written in the blank in their notebook. You may want to use the above definition or one provided by the group.

As part of the discussion I share our experience with Gary because it's very clear in my mind and through it I can clearly introduce the insight. Use an experience that is personal to you, one that you can feel. Be sure it's relatable and believable. You may want to share a series of short experiences rather than one long one. You may choose to share experiences in your life that were significant in your decision to not fully appreciate who you are: When you didn't get picked for a team. When you didn't get asked to dance. When you were conviced you were less loved than a brother or sister. When you were publicly scolded. When you did something foolish in front of friends. Or, you may want to share a time when you treated someone without dignity because they didn't do or look right.

Remember, this sharing is not a "public confession". This sharing is to show the group that we really do hide a WBL SELF behind a menagerie of monster beliefs and we also help others to do it, too.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: WRITE AN ALLITERATIVE STATEMENT THAT SPEAKS TO THE INSIGHT THAT MONSTER BELIEFS CAN TAKE THE FOCUS OFF THE WBL SELF. THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLES:

(1) PHOOEY TO FEROCIOUS AND FOOLISH FANTASIES THAT FOUL UP MY FUN.

(2) MONSTER BELIEFS MESS UP MOSTLY MARVELOUS ME.

(3) MAY THE MAGNIFICENT ME MAIM MY MONSTERS.

_____

_____

EXPLANATION: Emphasize the point that the failure to appreciate our SELF has come through learned beliefs. These beliefs are SELF defeating and need to be challenged. The alliterative statements are an enjoyable way of doing this. Ask the participants to do one or two examples.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: DRAW A PICTURE OF YOUR MONSTERS

EXPLANATION: EACH OF US HAS AN INNER, PRIVATE SELF WHICH IS ALWAYS WBL. WHEN WE BELIEVE OUR WORTH AS HUMAN BEINGS IS DEPENDENT ON WHAT WE DO AND HOW WE LOOK (MONSTER BELIEFS), OUR WBL SELF BECOMES HIDDEN. IT'S AS IF IT WERE SURROUNDED OR TRAPPED BY THE VARIOUS MONSTERS OF THE MIND.

DIRECTIONS: DRAW A PICTURE OF YOUR WBL SELF SURROUNDED BY MONSTER (NONSENSE) BELIEFS. MAKE YOUR DRAWING AS ELABORATE, COLORFUL, OUTRAGEOUS AND AWESOME AS POSSIBLE.

IDENTIFY SEVERAL OF YOUR OWN PET PERSONAL MONSTERS AND INCLUDE THEM IN YOUR DRAWING. TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY YOUR MONSTERS, THE FOLLOWING MAY BE HELPFUL.

(1) MONSTER MADNESS HAS TO DO WITH EITHER WHAT YOU DO OR HOW YOU LOOK.

(2) MONSTERS HAVE TO DO WITH A BELIEVED INCREASE OR DECREASE IN HUMAN VALUE.

YOU MAY WANT TO USE THE BACK OF THIS PAGE FOR YOUR DRAWING.

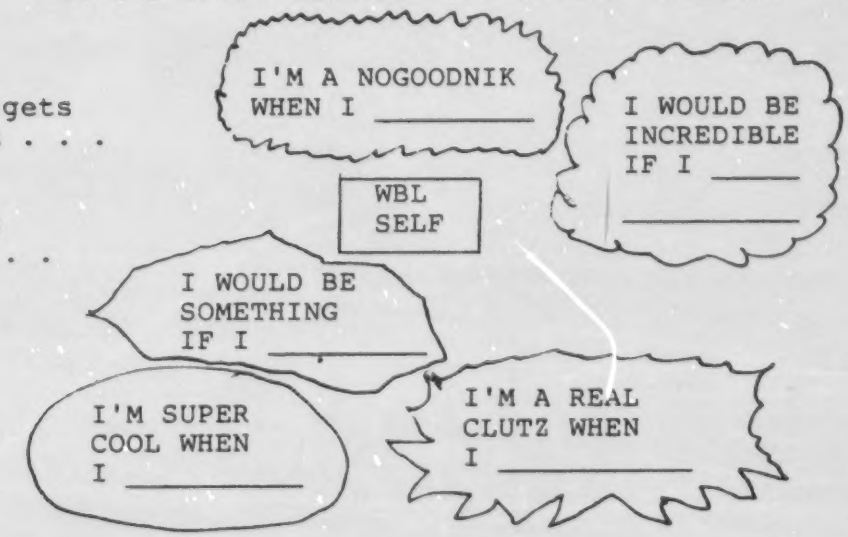
EXPLANATION: The purpose of this activity is to help develop a picture of the WBL SELF surrounded (sometimes hidden) by monstrous beliefs about the SELF. It may be necessary to give explicit directions to aid in the creation of this picture. For example:

PRESENTER: "In drawing this picture, put your WBL SELF in the middle. You may want to brighten your SELF up with colored pencils because you are, after all, beautiful.

After that is completed, surround your SELF with Monster Beliefs. It doesn't matter how you draw them, but make them big enough to write Monster Belief Statements inside each one. Let me show you on the board kind of what I have in mind.

HINTS:
My worth gets less when . . .

My value increases when I . . .



"Notice how the monster beliefs limit the value of the SELF. It places a condition on Human Value. Let's have some examples of monster beliefs we can use in the drawing. For example, "I'm super cool when I win." Let's have another." (Get at least five examples but encourage everyone to think of their own for their own drawings rather than copying the example on the board.)

"Notice I left space between the Monsters. Do the same on your drawing. I'll explain why later."

(WORKBOOK) EXERCISE: SELF ACCEPTANCE SCALE

DATES AND TIMES

10									
9									
8									
7									
6									
5									
4									
3									
2									
1									
0									

EXPLANATION: The SELF ACCEPTANCE SCALE is provided as a record of feelings about SELF. Encourage the marking of the scale several times a day recording the date and the time. Discuss the difficulty of constantly maintaining a "10" (joyful, excited, happy, etc.).

PRESENTER: "The numbers on the scale represent how you feel about your SELF. Remember, there are no good or bad feelings but there are positive ("Hooray!") and negative ("Yuk!") feelings. 10 is "Hooray!" and 0 is "Yuk!"

Mark how you feel about your SELF periodically during the day. In addition, keep these thoughts in mind:

(1) However you <u>feel</u> about your SELF is O.K. You may not like to feel "Yucky" but it's O.K. to feel yucky.

(2) Take a hard look at the judgments you're making about your SELF. Are the judgments placing conditions on the value of your SELF? Do you not like your Total SELF because your Public SELF doesn't meet the requirements of behavior and looks? Is it possible to like your SELF even though you've messed up or somebody told you you messed up? If I can like my SELF under these conditions, why don't I?

(3) When you record your feelings, remember, life is a decision. The only one that can determine your value to you is you. Mark your scale honestly (check out your feelings), but realize that the choice is yours (more about that choice in Part II).

(4) Mark your scale at consistent times -- morning, noon and night, or whatever. Play

detective. Look for clues for why you feel as you feel. Are there particular times when you judge your SELF more harshly than others? Do your feelings change dramatically with certain, particular events? With certain people? Does it have anything to do with how rested you feel? Whether you're healthy or sick? Does your feeling about your SELF change on days you have assignments due? test to take? ball games? parties? Is there a difference between how you feel aobut your SELF on Monday and how you feel about your SELF on Friday? You get the idea."

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: MONSTER MADNESS QUIZ

A SLEEPING MONSTER:

_____GATHERS NO MOSS

_____IS WORTH TWO IN THE BUSH

__X__CAUSES NO PAIN

HOW DO YOU AWAKEN A SLEEPING MONSTER?

_____POKE IT ("YOU NEVER DO ANYTHING RIGHT!")

_____KICK IT ("WHAT EARS! LOOK! IT'S DUMBO!")

_____PINCH IT ("BEING EXCLUDED. BEING IGNORED.")

__X__ALL OF THE ABOVE AND OTHERS

EXPLANATION: Before assigning this quiz, explain that emotional pain (and pleasure) comes <u>not</u> from a source outside of our SELF but from within our SELF. (NOTE: This process of causing our own feelings is the subject of Part II. You may want to read ahead before presenting this exercise. For now the metaphorical monsters will serve as an introduction to this process.)

When our monsters (our SELF defeating beliefs) are "awakened" or "stirred" or "poked" they turn on us and we feel emotional pain, hurt.

For example, if I believe my Human Value is dependent (is conditioned) on how well I present (perform) this material to the group, criticism of my performance will result in emotional pain -- the amount of pain being dependent on the severity of the criticism and the strength of the

belief. A comment like "Hey, you're boring," would likely result in some sort of behavior that demonstrates I have felt the pain: an AGGRESSIVE reaction -- either verbally or physically, or a PASSIVE reaction like crying, taking on a "poor me" look or some other behavior specifically chosen to "pay you back for the hurt you've given me."

The fewer and/or the weaker the monster beliefs, the less emotional pain will be experienced. For example, if my physical appearance is not believed to be a condition for my SELF acceptance, I will feel no emotional pain when criticized about this particular body characteristic. "Boy, you're a real fatty!" "Yes. I am."

This concept will probably be difficult to share. There may be resistance from the group. It squarely places one's emotional state on one's own shoulders. That kind of responsibility is usually accepted with great reluctance. Be open to questions and encourage discussion. Remember the program motto: "Believing is nice but understanding is acceptable."

Before assigning the Monster Madness Quiz clarify the understanding that all our monster beliefs are harmless (sleeping) until aroused by a <u>believed</u> attack on our SELF.

Assign the Quiz and discuss the answers.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: <u>MONSTER MUMBO JUMBO</u>

MY MONSTER BELIEF:	"TO LIKE MY SELF, I MUST BE GOOD LOOKING."
A POKE, KICK OR PUNCH:	"YOUR HAIR LOOKS AWFUL."
MY MONSTER AWAKENS:	"OUCH!" I FEEL HURT.
I REACT:	Poke back. Walk away. Cry. Etc.

<u>PLAY MONSTER MUMBO JUMBO</u>

MY MONSTER BELIEF:_____

_____

A POKE, KICK OR PUNCH:_____

MY MONSTER AWAKENS:_____

I REACT:_____

EXPLANATION: Before assigning this exercise, give a personal example of the Mumbo Jumbo routine and emphasize that it is based on a conditional view of the value of SELF.

The words "Mumbo Jumbo" are meant to indicate trickery, chicanery, prestidigitation. Talk aobut your monster beliefs in those terms.

PRESENTER: "It's nonsense for me to believe that my SELF can be magically changed through my performance or appearance, but sometimes I do believe that and cause my SELF undesired and useless anxiety. For example, I may look in a mirror and notice that my hair is rapidly turning gray (or worse, falling out) and feel depressed. My monster belief is "Young is good; old is bad. Gray hair, or falling out hair, is a sign of being old. That's me. Therefore, I'm bad." My reflection in the mirror pinches my monster, wakes it up and I feel pain. Perhaps I feel depressed. In my depression (an O.K. feeling) I overeat, overdrink, kick the cat and give you extra homework (not O.K. behavior).

"That's how the Mumbo Jumbo game goes. Got the idea? Any questions? Go ahead and try it in your workbook on Page 9.

EXERCISE: DISCUSSION

QUESTION: IN PLAYING MONSTER MUMBO JUMBO, DOES THE HURT COME FROM THE PERSON "POKING" OR DOES THE HURT COME FROM YOUR OWN MONSTER BELIEF? EXPLAIN.

SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION: IF I BELIEVE (MONSTER MUMBO JUMBO) MY PERFORMANCE AND APPEARANCE DETERMINE MY HUMAN VALUE, I WILL CAUSE MY SELF EMOTIONAL PAIN WHENEVER THIS PART OF MY SELF IS CRITICIZED AS "NOT GOOD ENOUGH."

EXPLANATION: It is very difficult to accept the responsibility for one's own emotional state. Typically we try to blame our feelings on

someone else or give them the credit ("You make me mad." "That really hurt me." "You have made me very happy." "It's very exciting.") The purpose of this discussion is to: (1) Help the participants recognize this difficulty. (2) Encourage the assumption of the responsibility for one's own emotional state.

The benefit of knowing you cause your emotional responses is knowing you can also control those emotions if you choose to do so.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: "OPEN PATHS" TO MY WBL SELF

"OPEN PATHS: ANY THOUGHT, COMMENTS, ACTIONS OR CRITICISMS ABOUT MY SELF (BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE) THAT DON'T BLOCK MY VIEW OF MY WBL SELF AND MY BELIEF IN MY GOODNESS REVEAL OPEN PATHS.

Look at your "Monster" drawings on the back of Page 8. Notice the spaces through the monster beliefs. These spaces represent areas in your life where you can see clearly into your WBL SELF. There are no SELF defeating, nonsense, monster beliefs blocking the way.

I have many OPEN PATHS to my WBL SELF. To name just a few:

_____

_____

_____

HINT: If your Public SELF is criticized and you feel no hurt, no pain, you have probably discovered an OPEN PATH to your WBL SELF.

EXPLANATION: This is a difficult exercise. As fallible human beings, there may be times when an Open Path, that is usually open, will close. The participants will want to discredit that as an open path. Encourage them to identify paths that are usually open. Open Paths, like Monster Beliefs, are decisions. We choose their existence and their activity. The difference is that Open Paths are a belief in our goodness rather than in our conditions for goodness.

As you live your life, my friend,
Whatever be your goal.
Keep your eye upon the donut,
And not upon the hole.

This exercise, like many of the others, will become clearer through your personal sharing.

PRESENTER: "You have seen that 'junker' car I drive. I've heard several of you comment rather negatively about it. I would list my car, a symbol of my employment success (performance), as one of my Open Paths. It serves its purpose, getting me to and from work, and though it is rather ugly, I don't feel ugly when I'm associated with it. On occasion I do feel embarrassed; at times I do wish I had a sleek sports car instead. Usually I don't.

I'm confident in my SELF as a teacher -- that's my Public SELF performing as a teacher. If others criticize my teaching I can usually separate that performance from the unchanging goodness of my WBL SELF and, therefore, don't need to defend my SELF. Also, I would judge that their critical comment was based on inadequate information and if they asked me I would simply and honestly tell them I think I'm a good teacher.

This is fun. I guess I have a lot of Open Paths as I think about it. Let me give just one more example. My nose. I know it's big but it's no big deal...so to speak. My sense of worth does not rest on my nose.

So I would list my car, my job and my nose as Open Paths. What would you list?"

BE CREATIVE: How else can you help your group find their WBL SELF through the surrounding Monster Beliefs? How about some role play activities where you set the scene and let volunteers act out their reactions and/or responses. "How would you act in this situation? Why? What kind of Monster Beliefs or Open Paths do you have that would result in that kind of behavior?" Good luck and have fun.

INSIGHT #5: THE SELF ACCEPTANCE I EXPERIENCE OF ME, AND OTHERS IS DETERMINED BY THE MESSAGES I CHOOSE TO LISTEN TO.

Try to imagine a person who is totally satisfied with her SELF. She would have absolutely no Monsters surrounding her WBL SELF. This person would have no defensive behaviors because she would believe in no conditions on her value. Because she had no monsters blocking her view of anyone else's beautiful SELF. She would love others as she did her SELF -- without limit and without condition.

This imaginary person is us -- with some limiting and conditional love tacked on. We love, care for, accept, and appreciate others in the same proportion that we do our SELF. (I will love who you are with the same intensity and clarity that I love who I am.) Others serve as mirrors for us. They reflect who we are, or, more accurately, who we think (judge) we are. If I have a monster belief about body shapes (a belief that "good" bodies make "good" people) I will probably be critical of fat people, skinny people, very short and very tall people. I will measure my Human Value against people I believe to have the "right" body shape. If I believe thick, healthy looking hair does good people make, I'll be judgmental of bald people -- and hairy people since I'm loosing my hair. If I believe education makes the person, the educational level of the people I come in contact with will be a determining factor in how I judge their worth. The extent of other's education will be a determining factor in how I feel about me when I'm with them. My reflection, my judgment, of my SELF will be superior, inferior, about the same, etc.

The imaginary person described previously, the one who is totally SELF accepting, would always have positive reflections of her SELF. Since there would be no conditions on her value, she would always believe in her goodness no matter what comments she heard or experiences she had. If she was criticized for being too short, she would reply with something like: "How short would be just about right?" (said in an uncritical way) or "I'm sorry you have a problem with body size. Is there anything I can do to help?" (said with sincerity) or "Height does have it's disadvantages, but what the heck, nobody's perfect." (said honestly). She would have no need to defend her SELF. She is completely out in the open (unbothered by monster beliefs) and willing and anxious to share her SELF with others just as she is -- a perfectly WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL AND LOVEABLE person that can be imperfect in behavior and appearance.

I don't happen to know anyone that is this perfectly satisfied with SELF. The people I know, including my SELF, frequently hear messages sent to us via the Monster Express. To rid our SELF of <u>all</u> nonsense beliefs is probably not realistic. To expose and reduce nonsense beliefs whenever we can and as effectively as possible, is productive. Whenever we can do this and see clearly into our beautiful SELF, we will respond to the world non-defensively. We will assert our SELF. We will readily accept our SELF and others. For example, I am really struggling to type this. If someone were

to comment, "You're a lousy typist," I would have no need to react defensively, "Oh yeah! Who asked you anyway?" I would not reflect an image of an angry, inadequate SELF. I absolutely don't believe my Human Value is in any way based on my ability to type. There is an Open Path to my WBL SELF. I could see into my SELF (no Monsters in the way) and I would allow others to see in, too. "You're right. I am rather inadequate at typing. Sometimes I get frustrated with all the erasing but mostly I just feel challenged."

In those areas where I have at least a partially obstructed view of my SELF, I want to keep some distance between my <u>believed</u> not very attractive SELF (ugly monstrous me) and other people. Recently I was criticized about something at work. Though I am cognizant of the difference between my perfect Being SELF and my imperfect Doing SELF I sometimes intuitively transfer criticism of my performance (job) to criticism of my Whole SELF. When I heard this criticism (a <u>believed</u> attack on my SELF <u>not</u> just on my ability <u>to</u> <u>do</u> my job) I felt angry and embarrassed (angry because I thought, "You shouldn't tell me how to handle this matter," and embarrassed because I thought, "It's possible she's right. Maybe I didn't handle that quite right. That would be awful.") My relationship with this person was, for a while, strained. She had wandered into my "Monster Land" and woke up a Monster named Job ("Your value as a human being is directly related to how well you do your job," says Monster job). I allowed that nasty Monster to attack and hurt me. I wanted to protect my SELF (I believed I needed protecting). I wanted to hurt back (I believed she had hurt me). These Monsters are painful. I wanted her to experience a little Monster pain too ("Listen. Why don't you just take care of your responsibilities . . . if you can . . . and I'll take care of mine.") OUCH!

Sometimes we can see clearly into our SELF. At those times we want to help others see their beautiful SELF too. ("Thank you for your comments on how I handled that. You may be right. I'll think about what you said.") Other times the Monsters are too many, too loud and too much in charge. At these times we set out to help others see their Monsters too. Until recently my wife was a housewife and mother as her major occupation. One of the Monsters that she kept around was named Job and frequently she heard from her Job Monster: "Unless you do your job well in all ways and at all times, you cannot possibly be a good person." The following example may help make sense out of the insight that monster messages can block our view of both our SELF and others. Several months ago, Julie and I got into (we chose) a very hectic schedule. We were getting less sleep than we wanted and probably less than we needed. One night we went to bed quite late after a strenuous but enjoyable evening of involvement in a favorite cause. The next morning I woke up early to get ready to go to work. I was feeling good. I felt tired but it was a fulfilled kind of tired. I didn't feel the scratching of any monster wishing to talk to me. So I reached out in kindness to Julie saying to my SELF, "She really needs the sleep. I'll get my own breakfast and let her sleep in." As I was leaving the bedroom, she awakened, "Oh my gosh! I overslept. I'll get up and get you some breakfast." "Don't worry about it, sweetheart.

I'm a big boy now. I can fix my own breakfast. Go back to sleep. You can use the rest." "Thanks, hon. I really am tired." What has happened is that even though the Monster is there ("Do your job or you're no good"), I didn't poke at it to either motivate her to action or to try and instill guilt for lack of action and, more importantly, neither did she. (Part II will explain how it is not possible to make someone feel guilty even though we often try to do it.) Back to the story. The next night we stayed up very late again. That morning the late nights and our energy consuming involvement are starting to catch up with me and I'm having a little more trouble seeing into my beautiful SELF. I'm not hurting too much so I'm not out to hurt . . . too much. That morning, as I was getting dressed, I heard a voice, just below the conscious level, talking to me about the conditional value of my SELF and I begin to lightly evaluate my performance of the night before and the expectations of my performance in the day to come. Did I measure up? Will I be good enough? I also, again just below the conscious level, begin to think of Julie's value in a more conditional way and I would like her to at least review those conditions (for goodness). I don't want her to hurt badly (I don't hurt badly). I just want her to have an awareness. As I put on my socks, I sat a little bouncy on the bed ("Oops") and low and behold, Julie woke up. "Did I oversleep again?" she asks with a touch of embarrassment and a pinch of guilt in her voice. (I hear the review of conditional SELF acceptance going on without any help from me but I take some responsibility anyway.) "Ya. I guess you did. Don't worry about it. Go back to sleep. I'll eat alone. Boy, am I tired (I add as I leave the room just to make sure she knows that it isn't easy for me either)." "Bob, I'll get up and fix breakfast," she calls after me. But she's really checking it out to see if she will still be loved even if she's not performing her "duty". (See how the monster works? If the condition for a loveable SELF is performance and appearance, how can you possibly be loveable unless you perform "right"?) Feeling better about my SELF. finding my SELF pretty loveable after all, I call back, "Go back to sleep, you silly goose. See you tonight if I make it through the day." (Just a little something there on the end to insure some thoughts of me during the day. My SELF image is O.K. but growing weaker -- "Please love me anyway.") That next morning, after another late night, it seems I barely have the strength to turn off the alarm (which I immediately blame for my misery). I am not very strong on this morning, either physically or psychologically. My beautiful SELF is surrounded by years of collected monsters and I don't reach in me for the strength to challenge very many of them and get through to the WBL person called me. I'm hurting this morning and anyone that gets in my way is going to hurt, too. My Monsters are energized and I'm (we're?) about to attack anyone who even comes near. When I return from the shower I turn on the bedroom light. I can't find my brown shirt and that's the only one I could possibly wear today. Julie (I'm not surprised at all) wakes up -- suddenly and rather unpleasantly -- with the bright light shining in her eyes. From covers pulled over her head, a voice calls out, "I can't believe I did it again, honey. How could I not hear the alarm three mornings in a row?" she asks with the desire for a stay of execution in her voice.

"It's easy!" I reply with anger. "You've had two days of practice!" (Misery loves company and my SELF is all alone this morning.) I have no desire to suffer alone and the tone of my voice alone shakes the Monster in Julie's head. She reluctantly, but dutifully throws back the covers. "I'll get you some breakfast." There's a coldness in her voice. I know Julie has that "Do-your-job-right-monster" and I land on it with both feet. "Don't worry about it. I'll get my own breakfast. I'm used to it. You seem to have this affair going with that bed and I wouldn't want to ruin a beautiful relationship." OUCH! Now we're both hurting. These emotional wounds will either become worse (if we continue to poke at each other's Monsters) or they will become healed (if we make the decision to put our own Monsters to rest and walk over and help the other to do the same). To love (unconditionally) or not to love at all? That is the question. Do I love my SELF enough to love you and to help you love your SELF? That is also the question. I once saw a banner that has become a favorite saying of mine: "Love is a hell of a lot of work." True. True. (Both love of SELF and love of others.)

Footnote: If you wonder about the end of the story, we lived happily ever after -- usually. It's our practice and, therefore, our doing, to help heal wounds. We've got some scar tissue but there are a lot of ex-monsters in the paths.

The purpose of this insight is to offer the understanding that our acceptance of SELF can be blocked by Monster Beliefs. These beliefs can keep others out and they can also keep us in. Think about the shy kid you have known. His shyness is the manifestation of a Monster Belief that keeps you and everyone else (that he's shy with) at a distance. He believes in his conditional goodness, his limited value, and doesn't want you too close to see what he believes is his limited and questionable worth. If he lets you fully into his life, he's not sure you're going to like what you see. But as long as he keeps you, and others, away, he won't be able to fully participate in life experiences and people he might enjoy. Think about the kid who is known as "the bully". That bully behavior is the manifestation of monster belief designed to keep people away (just like shy behavior). The "bully" is hurting when he's out hurting others. Monsters are not fun. They hurt. His Monster Beliefs are obvious. This one says, "Nice guys finish last . . . and I must never be last no matter what," (performance above all). That one says, "Wienies are Nogoodniks and tough guys are cool . . . And I must be cool to have value." And another one says, "The meek shall inherit the earth, but the tough shall control the meek . . . and I must be in control if I'm to have value." Take a minute to think about it and you can see lots of Monsters. There's the girl who flirts all the time. What might her Monsters be telling her. There's the rich kid that brags about his money. What could his Monsters be telling him? Is he really a "spoiled brat" or is he a WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL, LOVEABLE kid who is hurting because he chose to listen to some silly monster talk?

Since I was an adolescent I have consciously worked at being funny. There is nothing at all wrong about me being humorous.

It's fun for me and I believe usually enjoyable for others. But in my case, my humor is often the manifestation of a Monster Belief that distorts my view of my WBL SELF. Sometimes my humor is intended to keep others out (away from what I believe is not a very loveable SELF) and it just happens to keep me in. And now, at the risk of complicating the present example in order to eventually clarify it, let me introduce another of my Monsters, not unknown to most people, the "Do all things well" Monster. Said more popularly, "Anything worth doing is worth doing well." Well, perhaps unfortunately, there are many things I do rather poorly. OH OH! Big trouble. Since I grew up with the belief that I am no better than what I can do, I've got to protect my SELF. In a situation where I judge I am not doing too well (my Human Value is on the line)...Ta Ta Ta TAH...humor to the rescue: "Bob you are really funny. You're just great. What a gift. Is he always like this? You're something else." I think, "Whew. Good thing they don't know I'm a real jerk when it comes to politics and mathematics." So you see there is nothing wrong with the behavior of being funny. The problem comes when it (Me? You?) becomes monstrous because you believe: (1) The behavior somehow makes me better than I am without it. (2) The behavior will keep others at a distance. I won't have to risk relating to them in a more personal manner. My sense of humor is a sharing of my Public SELF. But I also have a Private SELF. This Private SELF is the intimate me. My funny monster may never allow my SELF the opportunity to go out to others. Once again, an example may clarify the point. Suppose I'm at a party and someone asks me for advice regarding one of their kids. I think, "I have to answer well. After all, adolescent behavior is my specialty. If I don't do well on this advice I won't be well." I am not sure exactly how to answer the request. I feel confused. I feel cornered. I feel embarrassed. At this point I have more confidence in my sense of humor than I do in my 30-second diagnosis of an adolescent problem and a related sure-fire remedy. I retort with an acceptable W.C. Fields imitation and an amusing comment and I'm off the hook -- my needlessly protected worth still at full measure. That amusing comment was a sharing of my Public SELF. A brilliant, analytical answer would have been a sharing of my Public SELF. But a response like, "I'm feeling cornered and just a little embarrassed. I feel really unsure. I'd rather not respond to your request right now. I'll have to think about it." That is a sharing of my Private SELF. It's intimate. It allows the other person right up close to my SELF. It's me going out to him.

Before leaving Part I of the program, I want to review my vision of the value of one's opinions, appearance and behavior. These things are important. I just think they have gotten out of perspective. Our Public SELF (how we look, act and think) has been given the box seat in the theater of life and our Private SELF (the intimate SELF manifested through feelings) has been relegated to the balcony . . . behind the post. If a child wants to perform in school, I think that's great. Let's encourage it in fact. But, let's help that child to know that that behavior is goal-oriented (he gets paid for grades? He wants to be a doctor? He loves learning? He gets spanked if he gets bad grades? Who knows?) and

can in no way magically transform him into a better person. Let's challenge beliefs such as "Good children study quietly," and "Good children finish their work," and "Good children are actively involved." Good students perhaps, but neither quiet study nor finished work on active involvement do good kids make. Goodness is always a given. We need to teach that when we punish and praise it is for behavior and appearance. It is not for Human Value. We are and always will be WONDERFUL, BEAUTIFUL and LOVEABLE and that cannot be changed no matter what.

The more successfully the goal orientation of looks and performance can be understood, the more Monsters around the SELF are going to roll over and die. As more and more of the beautiful SELF becomes clear the more others can see it, too. As we see clearly the obstacles that are in our way, we will also more clearly see into another's WBL SELF.

(NOTEBOOK) INSIGHT #5: THE ACCEPTANCE I EXPERIENCE OF MY SELF AND OTHER'S, DEPENDS ON WHAT MESSAGES I CHOOSE TO HEAR.

PRESENTER: "In your notebook on Page 11 is the word 'Insight #5'. On the space provided please copy the insight as I write it on the board."

EXERCISE: Message Senders:

INNER, PRIVATE SELF: "I BELIEVE IN MY GOODNESS."

OUTER, PUBLIC SELF: "I MUST PROVE MY SELF WORTH."

INTEGRATED SELF: "IF I WANT TO ACHIEVE A GOAL, I MAY HAVE TO ATTEND TO HOW I LOOK AND/OR WHAT I DO. HOWEVER, ACHIEVING A GOAL WON'T CHANGE MY VALUE ONE LITTLE BIT.

EXPLANATION: Use this activity, the information in the Explanation of the Insight and your own good sense to introduce Insight #5.

The focus of the insight is that acceptance is a decision. Acceptance of SELF and others depends on whom you choose to listen to -- not outside of your SELF but inside your SELF. The world you perceive (become aware of through your senses) is based on the messages you hear from your SELF about those perceptions. We all create our own realities. Hard to believe? Why do some people like certain music and others don't? Everyone's hearing the same music. Why do some see a picture as beautiful and others as absurd? Everyone's seeing the same picture. Why do some people get a "sick" feeling about a certain movie scene and others feel exhilarated? Everyone's senses are open to the same experience.

Our openness to the world around us parallels our openness to our SELF. We will listen to (be open to) that part of our SELF (Inner, Outer, Integrated) that we have chosen to trust in.

Flush out the monsters ("Performance and appearance determine your Human Value"). Introduce the hidden beauty and perfection of the Inner SELF. Foster a vision of SELF that integrates both of these parts into a whole and healthy person.

Once again, the introduction and the explanation of this insight will probably be best done through examples.

PRESENTER: "I have within me, and you have within you, the competency to choose to listen to whatever part of MY SELF I want to. Since we live in a world in which we typically are not isolated but related to other people, being attentive to performance and appearance (for goal reasons) makes sense. Soooo, listening to our Integrated SELF would seem to make the most sense, too. I think you have all seen me at times when I have chosen to do otherwise. For example, remember yesterday when I got so angry at Jenny? Well, I'll tell you what was going on with me. Now what I'm about to tell you didn't happen to me on a conscious level, where I was fully aware, but on a level just below my consciousness. It's like when you first learned to ride a bike and had to concentrate so hard on what you were doing but now you can ride a bike with no conscious thought. You still have to tell your SELF what to do but you're not conscious of doing.

So, back to the story. I saw Jenny <u>DOING</u> some things I didn't like. While I was <u>perceiving</u> the situation (I could see and hear Jenny), my three SELFS talked to me and told me what I was experiencing. Each told me a different story. First, my Outer Public SELF spoke up. "Listen, Bob, this is one of your Performance Monsters speaking and I just wanted to let you know that your value as a human being is rapidly slipping away. Your goodness is on the line, fella. If you want to continue to be a good person, you're going to have to be a good teacher; and if you want to be a good teacher you <u>must</u> be in control at all times. I don't make the rules,

that's just the way it is. Look at that kid, Jenny. Does she look like she's in control. And there's a couple of others that look like they might join her and then you'll have a real mess on your hands. And I'll tell you what, fella, unless you get some order here, you can just kiss your goodness goodbye. I think I'd start to panic if I were you and do something drastic, maybe even mean like embarrass her or something." Did I buy what that performance monster was selling? You bet! I've listened to "You are what you do" message most of my life and I usually fall for it hook, line and sinker.

Well, just about this time my Inner, Private SELF is trying to get my attention. "You're thinking you might lose control of the group if you don't get Jenny settled down, aren't you? You're feeling confused and frightened. Well, whether you're in control or not, your goodness won't change. Experience your feelings fully. Don't hide them from your SELF or others. That's how you can know you are fully alive. Those feelings are O.K. They're an intimate part of you. Love these kids enough to give that part of your SELF to them. Tell them you feel afraid and confused when you lose control. And by the way, Bob, don't associate Jenny's goodness with her behavior either. No matter how she behaves, her WBL SELF is always there if you just look for it." Did I listen to my Private SELF? Nope. I heard a little bit but my Performance Monster out argued and out shouted and so that's what I was believing. I didn't like feeling frightened and confused. I didn't believe it was O.K. to feel that way and I wanted to get at who I thought was causing those "bad" feelings. My SELF? Nope. Jenny? That's right. She would have to pay.

Well, my Integrated SELF was trying to get my attention, too. "Bob, listen to me," my Integrated SELF said. "I know you're frightened and confused. It's O.K. Believe me. And I also know why. You like a tight ship and things

are getting a little out of control. There's nothing wrong with liking a tight ship and it would be nice if everything were hunky-dory but they're not and that doesn't change your value one little bit. Forget that nonsense about your worth being decided by what you do. That's crazy thinking. You're always O.K. If you don't like this situation, attack the situation, not LOVEABLE Jenny. You can change the situation. You can't change Jenny. She'll always be good no matter what -- just like you. Stay in touch with your own beautiful SELF and you won't lose sight of Jenny's beautiful SELF. And those feelings of fear and confusion, experience them fully and share them openly. Let everyone have a peek at your intimate WBL SELF." Did I listen to my Integrated SELF? Not too carefully. My Public SELF spoke the loudest and I was an attentive listener. "Get control to get worth and stop the source of those 'bad' feelings," my Public SELF cried out and I was a believer."

EXPLANATION: Any sort of a personal sharing where the participants can understand the semi-conscious communication of the three SELFS will be helpful. After the sharing and any discussion that might follow, ask that a "message" be written in the blanks after the three SELFS on Page 11 of the notebook that would reflect the unique language associated with each particular SELF.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: <u>I HEAR YOU LOUD AND CLEAR, SELF</u>

DIRECTIONS: MATCH THE MESSAGE WITH THE APPROPRIATE SELF.

1. Public 2. Private 3. Integrated

_1_ "LOOK GOOD TO BE GOOD."

_2_ "WE ALL HAVE TWO TONS OF HUMAN WORTH."

_3_ "NOBODY IS TOTALLY PERFECT."

_2_ "I AM BEAUTIFUL." (3 ALSO IS ACCEPTABLE)

_1_ "PROVE YOUR SELF."

3 "DOING IS DELIGHTFUL BUT BEING IS BETTER."

1 "DO IT RIGHT!"

3 "DOING, LOOKING AND FEELING."

2 "I AM LOVEABLE." (3 ALSO IS ACCEPTABLE)

1 "EVERYONE SHOULD LOVE ME."

2 "I AM WONDERFUL." (3 ALSO IS ACCEPTABLE)

2 "BIRTH EQUALS WORTH."

3 "IT MIGHT BE FUN JUST TO TRY."

EXPLANATION: This exercise requires little, if any, explanation. It may be best to let the group go ahead on it on their own and then discuss and defend answers. There is definitely room for some latitude in answers.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: AGGRESSIVE VS. ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR

DIAL-A-MONSTER AND GET:

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR -- ACTING WITH HOSTILITY; ATTACKING; BEING INDIFFERENT TO THE RIGHTS AND NEEDS OF OTHERS; PROTECTING YOUR PUBLIC SELF.

DIAL-AN-INTEGRATED SELF AND GET:

ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR -- ACTING WITH CONFIDENCE IN YOUR WHOLE SELF; AFFIRMING OTHERS; POSITIVELY EXPRESSING THE VALUE OF SELF BECAUSE OF EVIDENCE, EXPERIENCE AND/OR FAITH; PROTECTING YOUR OWN RIGHTS WITHOUT INTERFERING WITH THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS.

DIRECTIONS: CIRCLE THE EXPECTED RESULT-BEHAVIOR.

MESSAGE FROM SELF -- "I HAVE NO NEED TO PROVE MY GOODNESS. HOWEVER, I MAY CHOOSE TO ACT IN AN AFFIRMATIVE MANNER TO EXPRESS MY SELF OR TO PROTECT MY RIGHTS OR THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS."

RESULTING BEHAVIOR: AGGRESSIVE ASSERTIVE

MESSAGE FROM SELF -- "MY VALUE COMES FROM WITHOUT, NOT FROM WITHIN. I MUST PROVE MY GOODNESS BY MY GOOD PERFORMANCE AND GOOD LOOKS. I MUST PROTECT MY SELF FROM THE CRITICISM OF OTHERS."

RESULTING BEHAVIOR: AGGRESSIVE ASSERTIVE

EXPLANATION: Use this exercise to explain that our behavior is our responsibility. We have a choice about [illegible]e behave. Our behavior is determined not by outside infuences but by the messages we choose to listen to from our SELF.

Much is currently being written about assertive behavior. You may find some of the material helpful in presenting this exercise.

The use of "Dial-a-_____" has no particular significance other than to "illustrate" that we choose which SELF we want to listen to ("Hello. Semi-conscious awareness, may I speak with one of my monsters, please?" or "May I speak with my Integrated SELF, please?").

As I near the end of the writing of Part I of this program, I realize that I am way behind my time schedule. "I am not doing good enough. What's wrong with me? Nothing is going right!" I sense a change in me (Is my worth draining away?). I become hostile and I huff and puff around the house like the big bad wolf -- I am the big bad wolf. My goodness left me when I didn't do good enough. I act out the image I have of my SELF. I am not much fun to be around. It's all my choice. The events in my life didn't change me from sweet, loveable Bob to Huff 'n Puff Bob -- I did that.

Provide the group with the definitions of aggressive and assertive behavior and ask that they copy them in their notebook on Page 12.

After completing the "Message from SELF" exercise you may want to give some examples of life situations and ask what resulting behaviors the group would expect. For example.

PRESENTER: "John, you're watching T.V. and your sister, whose job it is to take out the garbage, has forgotten and is out for the evening. Mom tells you to take out the garbage. What do you do?"

(STUDENT: "I'd tell her to forget it. It's not my job.")

"Are you being aggressive or assertive?"

(STUDENT: "Assertive.")

"Well, let's see. Are you affirming? Are you acting with confidence in your Whole SELF? Are you protecting your rights to watch T.V. and your Mom's right to a garbage-free can? Your voice tone suggests to me that you think you have to protect your SELF and you'll be hostile if need be. What are you thinking, John?"

(STUDENT: "What am I supposed to do, jump up and take out my sister's garbage?")

"How could you act assertively in this situation? What would you have to believe about your SELF to act assertively? What would you have to hear from your SELF to act assertively? Come on, the rest of you. Help us out here."

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: REACTIVE-AGGRESSIVE VS. RESPONSIVE-ASSERTIVE

WAS THE EXAMPLE SHARED REACTIVE-AGGRESSIVE

OR RESPONSIVE-ASSERTIVE?

EXAMPLE #1_____

EXAMPLE #2_____

EXAMPLE #3_____

EXPLANATION: This activity is a continuation of the previous exercise.

Ask the group to give real life examples of recent situations in their life and to describe what they did. As a group decide whether the behavior was Reactive-Aggressive or Responsive-Assertive.

BE CREATIVE: This is a difficult insight to share. There is a reluctance on the part of many to accept the responsibility for feelings and behaviors ("He made me mad," and "The devil made me do it."). Be bold and daring in your effort to present this insight.

PART II

INTRODUCTION

Albert Ellis (Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy, 1962) formulated a counseling model called Rational Emotive Therapy (R.E.T.). An adaptation of this model provides the format for Part II of this program. In general, Ellis theorizes that persons, things and events don't cause the emotional ups and downs we experience in life; rather, through our own misperceptions (our learned beliefs) about persons, things and events, we cause our own emotional roller coaster ride. The specifics of how this is possible and how we can take control is presented through the several insights of Part II.

Having taught the Self Image Program for several years, I offer this bias, but well-intended, bit of advice: "Keep it light." The R.E.T. model offers the learner a system for taking charge of his/her own destiny, to become Captain of the ship. That's pretty serious business. Not everyone wants that kind of responsibility. It's often easier to stumble along in pain and blame outside influences for the suffering rather than to say, "This is my pain (confusion, depression, etc.) and I can do something about it if I choose." So be enticing. Be inviting in your presentations. Our human foibles provide us with numerous opportunities to laugh at our SELF when we don't take our SELF too seriously. As you will discover in reading through this program, I frequently use my SELF as an example of one whose vision of reality is sometimes off center. I often exaggerate the examples both for the fun of it and to entice the participants to discover and expose their own nonsensical visions of reality.

Ellis has used humor effectively in presenting nonsensical thinking to aspiring proponents of this model. His best effort, in my opinion, was to write some lyrics to the tunes of old classics which he sings on a cassette recording called "A Garland of Rational Songs", 1976. I offer you a sampling of that tape as an example of a humorous approach and an exaggeration that effectively knocks loudly on the nonsensical doors of many of us. The title of the song is "Whine, Whine, Whine" and is sung to the tune of The Wiffenpoof Song:

> I cannot have all of my wishes filled, Whine, Whine, Whine
> I cannot have every frustration stilled, Whine, Whine, Whine
> Life really owes me the things that I miss
> Fate has to grant me eternal bliss
> And if I must settle for less than this, Whine, Whine, Whine.

So the focus of Part II is an invitation to change, to take charge of one's own life, to more fully enjoy the experience of living. The focus is not to lay down several psychological concepts with the promise of everlasting happiness to those who pick them up and the threat of constant suffering to those who don't. This

is, quite simply, another way to look at life. Have fun sharing the insights and demonstrating their application.

INSIGHT #1: I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR HOW I FEEL.

Explanation of the Insight

To come to a deeper appreciation of our SELF, it is important to fully accept our SELF as we are. This includes acceptance of our emotional experiences as our own. Most of us have been taught that our emotional experiences are caused by persons, things and events outside of our SELF and, therefore, we have little responsibility and certainly no control over how we feel. Common statements like "He makes me mad," and "That makes me happy," and "It embarrasses me," illustrate our belief in that confused notion. Our emotional responses are all within us. Through the experiences of our past, the persons, things and events of our present only stimulate these emotional responses. For example, if in my past I have learned that snakes are dangerous, icky, slimy creatures, when I see a snake I will react with appropriate feelings -- fear, disgust, repulsion, etc. Conversely, if I have learned that snakes are interesting, beautiful, useful creatures, I will react with appropriate feelings like curiosity, amazement and excitement. It is not the snake that causes the feelings. It is the perception of snakes, learned through experience, that causes the feeling.

Each time we experience an emotional response we can know with absolute certainty that the emotion came after a conversation with our SELF. Consider the feelings you have about a controversial figure like Richard Nixon. One person believes he was a victim of circumstances, essentially a good man and an adroit politician. Voicing these beliefs to SELF (and perhaps to others), he feels compassion, warmth, disappointment, etc. when thinking about the fate of Mr. Nixon. Another person believes Richard Nixon was a crook, an opportunist and a devious person. As he recalls what he has learned to believe about the man, he feels angry, cold and vindictive. None of the emotions emerge until after this inner conversational assessment of the person, thing or event in one's life has taken place.

Because many emotional reactions come so quickly on the heels of an activating experience, this process of (1) Something happens (person, thing or event), (2) Talking to SELF (based on past learned experiences), and (3) Emotional response, is not always obvious. I'm currently taking guitar lessons. As I sit in the seclusion of my home practicing in a back room, alone and unobserved, I play through my lessons reasonably well and with a sense of enjoyment. My vision of my SELF is quite positive and I follow my mistakes with a gentle "Whoops" and semi-consciously tell my SELF, "Don't worry. Try again. You'll get it." My attitude reflects a belief that "Guitar playing is fun; not very serious business. I do seem to improve with practice. In any case, my ability to play has nothing to do with my value as a human being." Then it's time for a lesson with my demanding and

exacting (my perception) teacher. My hands get sweaty. My fingers turn to sticks and I can't tell the difference between a guitar chord and a cord of wood. What in the world has happened to transform my experience from pleasant enjoyment to something bordering on stark terror? Is it the guitar lesson? No. Is it the teacher? No. Is it the setting? No. Is it the conversation I'm having with my SELF, some of it conscious, some of it semi-conscious? Absolutely. I tell my SELF things like, "I must play well. It would be awful if I fouled up. It's terribly important that I impress my teacher. If I don't play well he will think I'm a real jerk and I couldn't stand that. What a smuck I am for not being able to play better. I should have practiced more." From peace and fun to a nervous wreck and all at my own hands, or, more accurately, at my own thoughts. Most of these thoughts are not even part of my conscious awareness, but with a little bit of reflection I know the thoughts are alive and well in me.

The focus of this first Insight is to teach that we do cause our own feelings. In later Insights we will focus more specifically on the words, phases and sentences (as in the previous example) and teach some rational alternatives to nonsense beliefs. At this point the goal is to teach that we do constantly go through a process in living: (1) Something happens, (2) We think and talk to our SELF about it, (3) We emote, (4) We act or react. The intent is to teach that it does happen rather than concentrating on how it happens. It would be difficult to totally present this distinction. In fact, a complete distinction would not even be desirable. However, the activities of Insight #1 are designed to focus primarily on presenting convincing evidence that we do cause our feelings, i.e., that it does happen.

Because feelings seem to come to us spontaneously and without interior cause, this Insight may at first be difficult to accept as true. In your discussion of this Insight, it will be useful to begin with easily relatable examples of self talk that result in "automatic", habitual responses in behavior. For example, remember when you first learned to ride a bicycle and you (or a parent or some other "expert") talked you through riding: "Keep your balance in the middle. Lean to the left. Don't forget to pedal." Soon you rode like the wind, but you still (semi-consciously) gave your SELF all the instructions. The SELF talk was out of your awareness but it was there. You were programmed. The same is true of learning to drive a car. What is now seemingly an automatic and spontaneous response was first learned and made habitual. Think about the first time you entered a large school that was unfamiliar to you. On your first days you moved hesitantly, trying to acquaint your SELF with this new experience. Once you learned the layout you moved about almost automatically, sometimes arriving at your destination with little or no awareness of the path you walked. The talking to your SELF, the "instructions", were still there, but they became so habitual it appeared your movement was without interior cause.

Emotional responses are also habitual and they come only after you have programmed your SELF. It is not "natural" to get angry when insulted. It is learned. Later Insights will demonstrate how and what we learn. This Insight demonstrates only that all emotional responses come from within our SELF, not from exterior sources.

For many this Insight of causing our feelings through learned experiences of the past is a quantum leap from our present belief system. The belief that we cause our own feelings may be met with disbelief and resistance so go slowly in the process. Use examples from your own experiences and keep the examples simple and relatable.

INSIGHT #1: I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY FEELINGS

PRESENTER: In your notebook on Page 13 you will find the word "Insight #1." Please write the Insight in the space provided while I write it on the board.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: A BOOK -- HOPE FOR THE FLOWERS, by TRINA PAULUS

MY THOUGHT (OR OPINION) ABOUT THIS BOOK IS . . .

_____

MY FEELING ABOUT THIS BOOK IS . . .

_____

MY THOUGHT (OR OPINION) ABOUT THIS BOOK IS . . .

_____

MY FEELING ABOUT THIS BOOK IS . . .

_____

NOTE: At first glance, the book, Hope for the Flowers, may seem like an unrelated activity. I include it because it presents a broad view of all this program hopes to teach, i.e., a peaceful and joyful existence comes with the recognition of the goodness that is within all of us. When we rely on external sources for our happiness we will cause our SELF pain, suffering, anxiety and loneliness.

EXPLANATION: The reading of Hope for the Flowers serves at least three purposes: (1) It's a brief review to check if the participants understand the distinction between feelings and opinions, thoughts, judgments. This distinction is extremely important in Part II because the focus is to teach that our feelings result from our thoughts and judgments about the persons, things and events in our lives. (2) The book illustrates the point very clearly that our view of our SELF, others and life significantly motivate not only what we do but also the quality of our relationships with others (and with our SELF). (3) The book illustrates

very well the intangible goodness that exist in all of us if we just look within our SELF.

Begin the class by reading several pages daily. Hold the book open toward the group as you read. During the reading share your interpretations and invite comments from the group. As much as possible relate the story to the Insights of this program. An example of how this could be presented is as follows.

PRESENTER: "For the next several days, until we finish the book, I will begin each day by reading a few pages to you. The name of the book is Hope for the Flowers. I know it may look like a children's book, but it is not. In fact, on the cover it says it's 'a tale -- partly about life, partly about revolution and lots about hope for adults and others (including caterpillars who can read).'

O.K., let's start. 'ONCE UPON A TIME...' See? There he is bursting from the egg.

'HELLO WORLD . . . HE GOT BIGGER AND BIGGER AND BIGGER.' Now for this story to have meaning for you, I'll ask that you try to relate it to your own life as I read. Let me give you a little help with that. The caterpillar has just been born and the only thing he's interested in is eating and sleeping and that sort of thing. When you were first born that's just about all you were interested in, too. I know some people who are still only interested in eating and sleeping, but most of us, after a while begin to wonder who we are and what life is all about.

'UNTIL ONE DAY HE STOPPED EATING AND THOUGHT . . . IT'S GETTING DULL.' So now he's a teenager. He's growing fast, right? I hear teenagers say that, too. 'How's school?' 'Hey, it's really boring, man. It's getting dull.' So it's like Stripe has gotten into a pattern of living and he says, 'IT'S GETTING DULL.'

'SO STRIPE CRAWLED DOWN . . . EACH FASCINATED HIM BUT NOTHING SATISFIED HIM.' He's looking for something but he's not sure what. It's like you may have felt when you were in grade school waiting to come

to the junior high. Do you remember? 'Oh, I can hardly wait until I get to junior high. It's going to be great!' And remember how exciting it was when you first got here? Everything was new and different. But after a couple of months you just didn't feel as excited or satisfied. As we will find out in this book, <u>things</u> don't satisfy you. <u>You</u> satisfy you."

EXPLANATION: a final comment

And so, on goes the reading in that sort of manner. On-the-spot relatable comments may not come easily. Be patient with your SELF and don't rush. Enjoy the activity.

When you finish the selected pages (perhaps to the end of Chapter I), have the group write their thought or opinion about the book and at least one feeling. Ask for oral feedback to determine if everyone knows the distinction. Explain that the second "Thought and Feeling" blanks in their notebook are to be completed <u>after</u> the book is finished.

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: A FEELING ACTIVITY <u>(a snake)</u>

LIST THE FEELINGS:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE ABOVE ACTIVITY?

<u>I cause my own feelings.</u>

EXPLANATION: The purposes of this activity is to do something that will result in the group experiencing strong and varied emotional responses. Suggested activities could include: (1) Bringing a snake to class. (2) Wearing your coat inside out and acting as if nothing is different. (3) Having a temper tantrum in front of the class. (4) Singing, dancing or playing an instrument for the class.

I like to play the guitar and sing because I don't do either very well publicly and the resulting emotional responses are indeed strong and varied -- amused, embarrassed,

uncomfortable, disappointed, excited, etc.

Whatever the chosen activity, when it is completed have the group list at least six of the feelings shared by the group in their notebook on page 13.

I am guessing that more teachers would be willing to present a snake to the group (or have someone else do it) than would sing. So, I will use a snake as an example of how this activity could be presented.

PRESENTER: "We have a guest today. May I present Herman, the snake. ('Far out!' 'Yuck! a snake!') He's a nice snake and essentially harmless -- or so I have been told. Does anyone want to pet or hold Herman?"

NOTE: After everyone has had fair exposure to Herman, set him aside (better to put him in his cage) and discuss the activity.

I want to hear how you feel about snakes. As you share your feelings, I'm going to write them on the board. In your notebook, on Page 13 I want you to write <u>your</u> feeling about snakes and <u>five</u> other feelings taken from the list on the board. Who wants to be first?"

(STUDENT: I don't like snakes.)

Thank you for your opinion, but how do you <u>feel</u> about snakes? We're going to make a list of feelings, not judgments.

(STUDENT: I felt yucky when you brought him over here.)

O.K. Thank you. That is definitely a feeling. Do you spell that with a capital yuck? Let me hear some other feelings.

(STUDENT: The snake made me feel nervous.)

Thank you. I'll add 'nervous' to our list. Later I will explain that the snake didn't cause your nervous feeling, however."

NOTE: After eliciting feelings from most of the group, ask that they record

their own feeling and five others in their notebook. Then move right into the related exercise, 'What did you learn from the above activity?'

EXPLANATION: Having presented an experience guaranteed to result in many and varied emotional responses, the following summary exercise will help the participants recognize that none of the feelings were caused by the presentation but rather came from within.

PRESENTER: "You now have six different feelings about snakes listed in your notebooks. If the snake caused the feelings, for example, if he caused nervousness, then we would all have to feel nervous. But we <u>didn't</u> all feel nervous. Some felt interested. Some felt uncomfortable. Some felt yucky. That would have to be some powerful snake to make each of us feel a different feeling. 'Hsssssssss. You feel yucky. Hsssssssss. You feel frightened. Hsssssssss. You feel excited.' That's silly. Snakes can't do that. So if the snake didn't cause your feeling, where did it come from?

(STUDENT: I don't like snakes. I think they're slimy and disgusting. The snake caused my feeling.)

That's what you have <u>learned to believe</u>. You have learned to believe that snakes are 'slimy and disgusting'. And <u>because</u> you have learned to believe that about snakes, you feel disgusted. I won't argue with you about the character of Herman, the snake. I don't know him very well. I only met him today. What I will argue with you is that the snake didn't cause your feeling. Your feeling, and everyone else's feeling, came from what you believe to be true about snakes. If you believe snakes are interesting, you will feel interested. If you believe they are dangerous, you will feel fear."

EXPLANATION: a final comment: Continue the discussion until an understanding is expressed by the group. Remember, <u>believing</u> in this concept is their choice. The goal is to provide <u>understanding</u>. Encourage opposing opinions so that the belief that things (and persons and events) cause feelings can be openly challenged.

When the discussion has ended, ask the group to complete the exercise. "What did you learn from this activity?"

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: A FEELINGS CHART

PERSON THING EVENT	MY THOUGHTS, ATTITUDES, JUDGMENTS OR OPINIONS	MY FEELINGS
THE PRES.	_____	_____
TESTS	_____	_____
DANCES	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EXERCISE: WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE ABOVE ACTIVITY?

Persons, things, and events don't cause my feelings. I do.

EXPLANATION: This activity is much like the one just completed and is used to reinforce the understanding that we cause our own feelings. Any person, thing or event can be used that will result in strong judgments, and, therefore, strong feelings. Two blank spaces are provided for the participants to add any additional items. Encourage them to fill in the blanks with their own examples.

PRESENTER: "In your notebook on Page 13 there is a person (the President), a thing (tests) and an event (dances) listed. I want you to write in what you think about these three items and, also, how you feel about them. For example, I'm still uncertain about the President. I'm not sure where I am with him. I think he's doing an O.K. job, but I really haven't decided yet. So in the blank under 'Thoughts, etc.', I would write, 'I haven't decided' and under 'Feelings' I would write 'Uncertain' or maybe 'Cautious'.

My attitude about tests is that 'I don't like them.' My feeling about tests is 'apprehensive' or 'fearful'. You may think tests are 'fun' and 'challenging' and, therefore, might feel 'good' or

'eager' about them. I like to dance so I would write 'I like dances' and my feeling is 'excited' or 'enthusiastic'.

The point is this: My feelings, and your feelings, are not caused by persons, things and events but by our attitudes, judgments, opinions and thoughts about them. Your feelings reflect your thoughts just as sure as your bathroom mirror reflects you when you look in it in the morning. Any questions?

Take a few minutes and fill in the blanks with your thoughts and opinions about the three items listed. Don't forget to fill in the feelings you have as a result of those thoughts.

Also, fill in the two blanks with some persons, things or events that come to your mind. For example, brothers, and sisters, parents, school lunches, math class, pizza, your teacher, whatever you would like. Be sure to fill in your attitude and your feeling about whatever you choose.

When you have finished, we will talk about it."

EXPLANATION: a final comment — When the activity is completed, ask the participants to share what they wrote and point out the relationship between the judgments and the feelings. Encourage them to make the distinction that person(s), things and events don't cause feelings, we cause our own feelings, i.e., "Because I like school lunches, I feel good about them," or "Because math is hard for me, I feel worried about math."

NOTE: Don't pass up this opportunity to point out that if one wants to feel better about something (math, for example) the place to start is with the attitude about math. It's not easy but it is certainly not impossible.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE ABOVE ACTIVITY?

EXPLANATION: Again, the effort is to reinforce the learning that things, events and persons don't cause our feelings. We do. At

this point it is not necessary that the participants write that feelings are caused by the views and attitudes they cling to. It would be terrific if they did (in my view), but the focus is to simply get them to the realization that "Persons, things and events don't cause my feelings. I do."

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: EPICTETUS SAID, "MEN ARE DISTURBED NOT BY THINGS BUT BY THE VIEWS WHICH THEY TAKE OF THEM."

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT WHAT EPICTETUS SAID? NO OPINIONS OR JUDGMENTS, PLEASE. JUST FEELINGS.

EXPLANATION: Epictetus was a Greek philosopher who a couple of thousand years ago already understood and taught the Insight shared here. I use this quotation not only to reinforce the learning but to explain that this Insight is not some new notion or a fad in passing but a belief that has been held for thousands of years.

Ask the students to write the quotation in their notebooks on Page 14 as you write it on the board. The more senses brought into play, the higher the likelihood of learning.

Then ask them to write in how they feel about the quotation. This provides an opportunity to again determine if they are making that important distinction between feelings and judgments. Ask for an oral sharing of their feelings so you can correct any confusion, if it exists. If it is shared, "I think it's dumb," thank the person for the opinion but insist on a feeling that comes from the opinion that Epictetus spoke "dumbly".

INSIGHT #2: I CAUSE MY FEELINGS BY WHAT I SAY TO MYSELF

Explanation of the Insight

With Insight #2 we get to the heart of the matter. The groundwork has been laid. Now we will look more closely at that intimate existence in all of us, our feelings, and discover how they are a reflection of our attitudes about living.

It is frequently my custom to inquire into the mental health of persons familiar to me and strangers. Recently, as I passed a woman at the store, I asked, "How are you today?" Her response was, "I'm just fine. I hope you are, too." What a delightful response from this stranger who hoped I was well with life. Through the presentation of these insights, we offer more than the hope that life can be fine, but also the realization that each of us has a real choice about the matter.

The focus of this insight is to get the group to clearly see the relationship between what they believe and what they feel. For every person, thing and event, for which you have a belief, you will also have corresponding feelings. The stronger the beliefs, the stronger the feelings. "What do you think about school?" "I think it's great. It's really fun. I like the challenge." The person who thinks this way will have positive feelings about school. Some may be murmuring in the back row, "That's no insight. That's just common sense." To them I say, "Bravo! Exactly! Thank you!" This entire program proposes no more than a common sense approach to living. The Insight comes into play when we apply this bit of common sense to our lives, challenge our nonsensical thinking and learn to more fully enjoy life.

This Insight is the basis for Part I of this program. The effort is to teach the group to believe positively about SELF. The intent is to challenge those monstrous thoughts that say, "You are only as good as you perform and appear." If you believe the valididty of your life is somehow linked to your performance, your performance will be the benchmark by which you measure the quality of your existence. Such a belief seems to have been the motivating force that kept Stripe climbing the Caterpillar Pillar. As you continue reading Hope for the Flowers, point out that the external stimulus (the pillar) fails to provide Stripe with the lasting happiness and fulfillment he is seeking. The quality of his life, the joy of living, continues to elude him. Even when he becomes a great climber and works his way to the top (of his chosen profession), he discovers that even success (doing well) doesn't provide him with the answer to what life is all about. Not even the loving relationship he has with Yellow is enough to provide the peace and happiness he so arduously seeks. Not until the end, when he looks inside his SELF (and inside of others), does he go beyond his SELF and discover what he has been searching for.

The activities in this Insight demonstrate the need to examine our attitudes about life and discover how we feel about living. There are numerous examples in my own life where I pursued goals with the mistaken but tenaciously held belief that achievement of these goals would bring everlasting happiness. I remember struggling through college with the belief that I had only to earn that degree and blissful contentment would be everlastingly mine. Then I realized that it was not the degree but the job that held the key to happiness. Then I believed it was not the job but the right job that would bring the joy and peace I eagerly sought and so richly deserved. Such are the things (beliefs) that fool's gold is made of.

Our vision of life, our attitude about living, is always exposed in our feelings. For this reason the focus is on feelings and their source (beliefs, judgments, attitudes, etc.). The process is always the same: (1) We perceive something happening. (2) We think about what we perceive. (3) We feel. (4) We act or react. Step #2, what we think, gets most of our attention in the activities to follow in this Insight.

Sometimes our thoughts are so deeply embedded in our memories that we see our feelings as spontaneous rather than caused. As a result, we may react angrily to an insult with the belief that it is only "natural" to feel that way. The challenge is to discover and examine those powerful conscious and semi-conscious attitudes that cause our feeling reactions. An activity is provided that will take some practice, but will demonstrate how powerfully our beliefs, whether true or not, result in our feelings and behaviors. The intent is to help several selected participants believe they are holding up a heavy object. If the belief is strong enough (even though no object is actually present) they will react to the belief and the hand will lower under the "weight". It's a convincing activity that demonstrates the power of the mind. If we believe something is true we will react appropriately to that belief whether it is true or not. As we practice particular beliefs, they become semi-conscious and our reactions become habitual. It's because of these practiced beliefs and habitual responses that we come to the mistaken notion that persons, things and events outside of our SELF are responsible for how we feel.

I've had many opportunities to speak about this program to school faculties. Each time I speak I feel nervous and, at times, even fearful before the presentation. The degree of nervousness and fear varies from time to time but it is always there. I have been told by well-meaning but misinformed friends that it is only "natural to feel that way". The fact of the matter is that it is not natural. It takes practice to become nervous in front of groups. A newborn baby is as comfortable in front of 10,000 people as she is in front of her mother. Only through learned beliefs and practice does nervousness in front of groups become "natural". I've found that my nervousness grows and diminishes depending on the group I'm speaking

to (sounds like I'm blaming my feeling on the group, doesn't it?). These feelings are less present when I speak to elementary teachers and administrators and more present when I speak to secondary teachers. Why is that? Well, try as I will, I still have not constantly and fully relieved my SELF of the belief that my value as a human being is somehow magically connected to my performance. Semi-consciously I'm saying, "Please let me impress you. Please approve of what I am doing so I can approve of my SELF. It would be awful if I flubbed up. Oh, what a fool I would be if I behaved foolishly." It's my experience that, generally, elementary teachers and administrators are more receptive, more open, more forgiving. Secondary teachers, generally speaking, and in my view, are born in Missouri and have that "you'll have to prove it to me" aura about them. Given this perception and the nonsense beliefs I have tucked away in the back of my mind, I experience a varying degree of nervousness and fear, depending on the group. So you see, it's not the group at all. It's me and my perceptions.

This brief sharing of my emotional experience leads to several evaluative comments before going on to the activities and models for presentation.

First, you may be asking your SELF, "If the guy who is presenting this program can't control his emotions, what could possibly be the validity of the program?" A good question. The answer is this. The intent of this program is <u>not</u> to bring all emotions into check. The name of the therapy is <u>Rational</u> Emotive, not <u>Non</u>-Emotive. The intent is to help the participants discover underlying beliefs that lead to <u>debilitating</u> emotions and resulting <u>debilitating</u> behaviors. There was a time when I could hardly speak in front of my own faculty without a quivering voice and the appearance of a rock of jello, say nothing of a presentatin to a group of strangers. This program is like a road map showing a good route to follow to get to a desired destination; but, even a good route is not perfect. Perfection is not the goal. Moving along a chosen route is. Debilitating emotions and resulting behaviors are those roadblocks that result from words like, "I can't do that. I won't try. I would rather be safe and suffer than take the risk of moving and living." The focus is to help the participants grow if they choose to. It is to help them discover the source of their emotional experiences and challenge that source if it gets in the way of their living more fully.

Secondly, it would not even be a good idea to get rid of all emotional responses -- even if that were possible. My nervousness about speaking in front of groups results in my taking time to prepare my presentation. Without some apprehension I would likely saunter in, no notes in hand, and flippantly say, "Well, what would you like to know? Ask me and I'll try to tell you." Or, I might ramble aimlessly try to rely on my not too reliable memory, sharing concepts as they once in awhile spring to mind. The benefits of that are questionable. I know. I've attended presentations like that. (I wondered if the

presenter had never heard of the "natural" phenomenon of fear of rejection by an entire group.) Emotional response can keep us out of trouble. My fear of bee stings helps me avoid bees. My desire for an orderly home (to say nothing of avoidance of conflict) frequently motivates me to help with the housecleaning. My desire for security often pushes me out of bed in the morning to go to work and help earn our daily bread. It's not a question of eliminating feelings. It's the challenge of discovering beliefs that result in debilitating feelings that interfere with the act of living fully in a desired manner.

And, finally, I want to touch briefly on the belief in performance. John Powell, in his "Fully Human, Fully Alive" workshop, made a poignant distinction between performances and acts of love. When we perform for others, and it happens frequently enough, we do it with the hope of approval. Certainly there may be giving in performances, but there is usually an equal amount of taking. Many performances (those acts we do for others) are conditional: "I will perform for you if (with the condition that) you will approve of me. If you don't I will feel hurt, anxious, whiney and depressed." Acts of love, on the other hand, are unconditional givings with no strings attached, no expectations of a return on the investment of SELF. Being a lover, an unconditional giver, is the goal worth striving for. It frees the SELF up to just be. It allows for mistakes with the forgiveness of SELF rather blaming others for failures. It allows the choice to try again unencumbered by the fear of rejection. It allows one to live more fully.

INSIGHT #2: I CAUSE MY FEELINGS BY WHAT I SAY TO MY SELF

PRESENTER: On Page 14 in your notebook is the word "Insight #2". Please write the Insight on the blank provided as I write it on the board.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: A LIFE PROCESS

	POSITIVE EXAMPLE	NEGATIVE EXP.	YOUR EXP.
	STEP #1-SOMETHING HAPPENS (PERSON, THING, EVENT)		
	TODAY'S LUNCH	TODAY'S LUNCH	_____
(FOLLOWED BY)	STEP #2-THINKING OR TALKING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED		
	"GREAT! I LOVE MACARONI AND CHEESE."	"YUCK! I HATE MACARONI AND CHEESE."	_____ _____ _____
(FOLLOWED BY)	STEP #3-AN EMOTIONAL REACTION (FEELING)		
	HAPPY, EAGER	GRUMPY, RESISTANT	_____ _____
(FOLLOWED BY)	STEP #4-AN ACTION OR REACTION		
	HURRY TO THE LUNCH LINE. NOURISHMENT.	SKIP LUNCH. BUY CANDY. INCREASE CAVITY COUNT.	_____ _____ _____

EXPLANATION: Use this exercise to explain the life process we constantly go through. Emphasize that feelings and behaviors result from our thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and judgments and not from things (persons or events) that occur in our lives. Explain that positive feelings and behaviors come from positive thoughts, beliefs, etc. Negative thoughts result in negative feelings and behaviors. We are not teaching that all thoughts must be positive or you will fail the course. We are teaching that emotions and behaviors result from thoughts about what happens. Each of us clearly has a choice. We are not mindless emotional robots controlled by the things that occur in our lives. We are in control if we choose to be.

The emphasis is on Step #2 in the life process. The presentation might go something like this.

PRESENTER: "I want you to complete the Life Process exercise on Page 14 of your notebook. The steps of this process are given (1) Something Happens. Remember in the last Insight we talked about persons, things and events that happen in our lives. That's Step #1. In the example given in your notebook, the thing or event is a school lunch -- macaroni and cheese to be exact (allow the participants to share their attitudes about this particular lunch). In the example there is a positive and a negative view presented, i.e., 'Great! I love macaroni and cheese,' and 'Yuck! I hate macaroni and cheese.' That view is Step #2, what you tell your SELF about this thing that has entered your life. Your feelings, Step #3, will result from your attitude, your judgment, your thinking about macaroni and cheese. Macaroni and cheese neither makes you feel 'Great!' nor 'Yucky!' You do that all by your SELF by how you view it. If you see it as a monster that could devour New York, you will have negative feelings about macaroni and cheese. If you see it as something good, you will have positive feelings. It all depends on what you learned to believe about macaroni and cheese. How you behave will depend on your beliefs and resulting feelings. They are your feelings so how ever you behave is your responsibility. If you are so anxious to get to the food that you crowd in the lunch line, get in a fight and get sent to the office, that's your responsibility. If you feel "yucky" about it and spend your money on candy and that causes cavities, that's your problem and your responsibility, too. If you anxiously hustle down to the cafeteria and enjoyably devour the macaroni and cheese, you're also responsible for that behavior. You are responsible and in control of your behavior because you are responsible and in control of your feelings because you are responsible and in control of your beliefs and attitudes.

Concentrate on understanding the importance of Step #2 -- your beliefs and perceptions. 'Perceptions' are what you believe to be true about something. It's important to check out your perceptions to see if what you believe to be true is in fact true.

My wife tells me when she was a little girl becoming interested in jewelry, her mother told her, "If you put a ring on your finger that is too tight, we'll have to take you to the jeweler and have it cut off." She was afraid to wear rings because she believed (her perception was) that they would have her finger cut off. She shook like a leaf when I tried to put her wedding ring on her. Her perception was a little off. Practice checking out your perceptions of reality. Try the macaroni and cheese. Maybe you will like it. Maybe you won't. Make decisions based on what you know to be true rather than what you believe to be true.

There are some blank spaces where you can do an example of your own. Use the back of the page if there is not enough room."

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: AT WHAT STEPS IN THIS LIFE PROCESS DO YOU CLEARLY HAVE A CHOICE. WRITE "YES" OR "NO".

STEP #1 NO WHAT HAPPENS

STEP #2 YES WHAT I THINK ABOUT IT

STEP #3 YES WHAT I FEEL ABOUT IT

STEP #4 YES WHAT I DO ABOUT IT

EXPLANATION: This brief exercise is used to reinforce the learning that life is filled with choices. We may not always have a choice about what happens in our lives, but there is always a choice about the judgments we make, how we feel and how we behave in regard to what happens.

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: THE GROCERY BAG EXPERIENCE

WHY DID THIS ACTIVITY WORK ON SOME AND NOT ON OTHERS?

IT ONLY WORKED ON THOSE WHO BELIEVED

IT WAS HEAVY

RELATED EXERCISE: GIVEN STEP #1 (SOMETHING HAPPENS) FILL IN THE BLANKS FOR STEPS #2, #3 AND #4.

STEP #1 -- An imaginary grocery bag is placed on TOP OF THE RIGHT HAND.

STEP #2 -- "THE BAG IS HEAVY."

STEP #3 -- "I FEEL THE WEIGHT, MY ARM FEELS TIRED."

STEP #4 -- DOWN GOES THE ARM UNDER THE "WEIGHT".

EXPLANATION: This exercise is used to demonstrate the power of the mind (thoughts and beliefs) over our feelings and behaviors. It demonstrates how important it is to check out the validity of our beliefs because those beliefs result in how we feel and how we behave. It's not the truth, but our truth that determines resulting feelings and behaviors.

Use this activity to discuss more practical experiences in everyday life. For example, if you believe math is a difficult subject, you will feel apprehensive about math and probably will do considerably less well than you are actually capable. If you believe you are a lousy reader and always will be, you will feel reluctant about reading and your skill development will come slowly. If you believe you are not very good at talking to people and making friends, you will feel uncomfortable in social situations and it will be difficult to interact with others.

Encourage the participants to share their debilitative beliefs that effect their feelings and resulting behaviors. As encouragement, share some of yours.

When doing this activity choose at least three participants. Be selective. The activity will most likely succeed if the participants are not likely to feel embarrassed in front of the group, are "serious minded" about the activity and have a trust in you. Have the participants seated in chairs facing the group, sitting in an upright position with both feet on the floor and with eyes closed and arms outstretched, palms down and parallel to the floor. The presentation might go like this.

PRESENTER: "This experiment is important to the understanding of the life process we have

been talking about. I need three volunteers who are willing to be serious about it. O.K., I'll choose you, you and you. Sit in the chairs up here in front of the group. Sit straight with your feet flat on the floor. I want you to listen very carefully to what I tell you and try to believe what I say is true. You need to know that you will not be hurt and I do not intend to have you feel embarrassed. Just relax and listen very carefully. The rest of you remain very quiet. If anyone speaks or laughs or does anything distracting, it will interrupt their concentration and the experiment won't work. O.K. Let's try it. Both feet on the floor, arms straight out parallel to the floor with palms down. Eyes closed and be relaxed. Feel calm and at ease. I'm going to place a large and heavy grocery bag on top of your right hand. There it is. Try to feel it. It's very heavy. It's sitting on top of your right hand (pause). It's very heavy. You can feel the weight on your right hand (pause). It feels very heavy. Now I'm going to put a big bottle of coke in the bag. There it is (pause). It's very heavy. You can feel the weight. I'm going to add a bag of sugar. There it is. It's in the bag (pause). It feels heavy."

NOTE: This experiment will take only about 30 seconds before you get the desired results of someone's arm lowering under the "weight". Then ask that they open their eyes and observe what happened. Before having the participants go back to their seats, have them slowly lower their arms and shake them out.

EXPLANATION: When the activity is completed, have the participants share the thoughts in their minds as they imagined the grocery bag and the resulting weight. Obviously the thoughts (if it worked) will be the thoughts you suggested ("It's very, very heavy."). Review the lesson learned, i.e., we learn to perceive reality and feel and act according to that perception.

After completing the related exercise, discuss the practical application of the concept as suggested earlier. Some

additional examples are provided here. If you <u>believe</u> you are a capable student, you more likely will <u>be</u> a capable student. If you <u>believe</u> you are a nogoodnik, the more likely you are to <u>act</u> like a nogoodnik. Also, you may want to discuss the thinking process many successful athletes go through to "psyche their SELF up" prior to a performance, i.e., a weight lifter imagining the lift before he "pumps the iron" or a golfer imagining the flight of the ball before the swing of the club.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: THINKING AND FEELING

WHAT DO YOU <u>THINK</u> ABOUT CLEANING YOUR ROOM?

_____

HOW DO YOU <u>FEEL</u> ABOUT CLEANING YOUR ROOM?

_____

WHAT DO YOU <u>THINK</u> ABOUT HOMEWORK?

_____

HOW DO YOU <u>FEEL</u> ABOUT HOMEWORK?

_____

EXPLANATION: At this point, little explanation will probably be necessary in helping the participants complete this exercise. Simply assign the exercise and then move about the room to monitor the learning. Use this exercise to determine the extent of the learning of this Insight.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR VIEW (POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE) OF LIFE AND OUR FEELINGS ABOUT LIVING?

<u>A positive view of life results in positive feelings. A negative view of life results in negative feelings.</u>

EXPLANATION: Again, this exercise is a review to clarify the understanding that life is neither an "upper" nor a "downer". Only our attitudes about lived experiences result in our positive or negative feelings about living.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: IF YOU FIND ANYTHING IN YOU THAT IS BAD, IT'S BECAUSE YOU MEMORIZED THE WRONG ANSWERS WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG (STEP # 2) AND NOW YOU PRACTICE THE WRONG RESPONSES (STEP # 3 & 4). IF YOU CAN GET IN TOUCH WITH THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR SELF, YOU WILL DISCOVER THAT YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL, WONDERFUL, & LOVEABLE.

Imagine that when you were born an empty cassette was placed in your head. You asked QUESTIONS ("WHO AM I? WHO ARE YOU? WHAT IS LIFE ALL ABOUT?") AND MEMORIZED THE ANSWERS. THESE MEMORIZED ANSWERS ARE RECORDED ON YOUR TAPE. SOME OF THESE ANSWERS MAY BE WRONG.

"PLAY YOUR TAPE" AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. YOU MAY NEED TO CHALLENGE SOME OF THE BELIEFS YOU MEMORIZED.

ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE.

False SOME PEOPLE ARE BAD.

True SOME PEOPLE DO BAD THINGS.

True MY HAPPINESS IS MY RESPONSIBILITY.

False PEOPLE SOMETIMES RUIN MY DAY.

True YOU CAN'T MAKE ME STINK. (Thank you, Julie Hanel)

True LIFE IS A DECISION.

False ARE YOU NOW, OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN, OR HAVE YOU EVER MET A WEIRD PERSON?

False THINGS, PEOPLE AND EVENTS CAN UPSET ME, CAUSE ME MISERY AND JUST GENERALLY MAKE MY LIFE UNBEARABLE.

False SCHOOL BORES ME.

True I REALLY AM A FINE PERSON.

EXPLANATION: This exercise challenges some common beliefs we have about our SELF and the persons, things and events in our lives. Take some time to explain that if life is to be enjoyed (if pleasure in living is to be felt) it is first necessary to challenge and change those negative attitudes that cause negative feelings.

The opening paragraph refers to nonsense beliefs we have learned (memorized) about our SELF, i.e., that our goodness is earned through good performance and appearance. This learned belief is Step #2 in the life process. As a result of that learned message, we respond correspondingly to success and failure. This is Step #3 and #4 in the life process. The truth is internal human value never changes and we are always wonderful, beautiful and loveable. Only our performance and appearance can be judged.

Having discussed the opening paragraph, give the participants the opportunity to mark their answers to the TRUE or FALSE statements that follow. Use pencil and then review orally and allow for any necessary corrections. Encourage questions, challenges and arguments about each of the beliefs presented. The presentation following the opening paragraph might go like this.

PRESENTER: "How many thought it was true that some people are bad? O.K. For those of you who believe that some people are bad, how do you tell the difference between good and bad people? Can you smell the difference? Can you feel the difference? Can you look inside and see the difference? How do you do it? What criteria do you use to make the judgment?

(STUDENT: Some people are bad, like Adolph Hitler and people in prison for murder and rape. You can't tell me they're good?)

You're confusing goodness with good acts. You memorized the wrong answer when you were young and recorded it on your casette. I completely agree with you that some people, all people I suppose, do some bad things. And I agree that we can judge good and bad behavior. However, we cannot judge people's goodness. The two things are not the same. Remember when we played the boat survival game and people were chosen to survive because of what they could do, but we couldn't choose survivors when we tried to select them on the basis of their human goodness?

Don't forget that lesson learned. Get rid of what you have memorized on your tape and memorize this new information instead: Behavior can be judged; human value cannot. Any other comments . . ?

How many believe other people can make you stink?

(STUDENT: I didn't understand that one.)

Do you believe other people can decide how you feel about your SELF? Do you believe other people can determine your value? If you mess up and someone laughs at you and tells you you are a fool, do you believe you are a fool and, therefore, feel like a stinker? Others can judge your behavior but how you judge your SELF and, therefore, how you feel about your SELF is your responsibility. Don't give the job to someone else.

. . .

Some people act weird but that doesn't magically change them into a weird person. Goodness doesn't change. Only our behavior changes (and is judgeable) and sometimes we behave weirdly -- welcome to the human race. It's sensible to say, "I think that's a weird thing to do." It's not sensible to say, "You're weird." That's like believing in magic, the power to change someone from a human being into a weird thing.

. . .

Boredom is the product of an uncreative mind. If you feel bored, that's fine. Take the responsibility for the feeling you have created in your SELF. Say, "I have not chosen to be creative enough to change this situation into something I might more fully enjoy."

EXPLANATION: a final comment

Go through the list of statements offering challenging comments and inviting challenging comments for each nonsense belief. For the statements that are true, ask for feedback from the group to determine their level of understanding about why they are true.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: EXCERPT FROM "DESIDERATA" BY MAX EHRMANN

Beyond a wholesome discipline,
Be gentle with yourself.
You ARE A CHILD OF THE UNIVERSE
NO LESS THAN THE TREES AND THE STARS;
YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO BE HERE.
AND WHETHER OR NOT IT IS CLEAR TO YOU
NO DOUBT THE UNIVERSE IS UNFOLDING AS IT SHOULD.

WRITE THE LINE OF THE EXCERPT YOU LIKE BEST.

_____

EXPLANATION: This excerpt from "Desiderata" is used to focus attention on our positive SELF. It presents a view, a belief, an attitude about our SELF that is positive. Go over the excerpt line by line and discuss it. Having the participants select the best liked line serves the purpose of having them look more closely at the poem, and, perhaps, more closely at their SELF. A sample of how you might proceed follows.

PRESENTER: "Let's read this poem together. 'Beyond a wholesome discipline' means you are responsible for your own acts; make wise decisions about how you conduct your SELF.

'Be gentle with yourself.' That means don't judge your SELF too harshly. Allow your SELF to mess up from time to time without undue criticism of your human value.

'You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars.' Have you ever seen a Redwood Tree or a huge Oak Tree? They are absolutely magnificent. And have you ever been to Eastern Oregon on a clear night and looked at the stars? It's an incredible sight. You are no less than the tree and the stars. You, too, are absolutely magnificent and incredible.

'You have a right to be here' means you don't have to prove your value, you don't have to earn your existence, it's a birth right. Your value as a human being is unchanging.

'And whether or not it is clear to you no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.' We will talk about this in more detail later but for now it means that things happen in our lives that we may not like. Even if we don't like some of the things that happen to us, we always have a choice about how we feel about our SELF when they happen."

EXPLANATION: Before moving onto the next Insight, I would like to make a final comment about this Insight. Many years and lots of practice go into cementing in some of the nonsense beliefs we have about our SELF. These beliefs are not always pried loose easily. Be patient but forcefully challenge the group to see the beauty that is theirs, irrevocably inherited at birth.

INSIGHT #3: I TAKE CHARGE OF MY LIFE WHEN I CHOOSE TO THINK SENSIBLY ABOUT MY SELF, ABOUT OTHERS AND ABOUT ALL THE THINGS AND EVENTS IN MY LIFE.

Explanation of the Insight

Abraham Lincoln is credited with saying, "Everyone is just about as happy as they coose to be." That's honest, Abe. No doubt about it -- happiness is a decision. In fact, to carry that a step farther, life is a decision. You can choose to live it fully or you can choose to live it partially restrained by believing that living is really tough stuff. The decision to live fully comes with the realization that being at peace with life, experiencing joy in living, has to do with an emotional response to living, not with things acquired, successful performances or losing 15 pounds. All these things relate to the external SELF (body and performance). They are goals. They may be good goals. Happiness may be experienced with the achievement of these goals. But, they do not cause happiness and they certainly do not increase human value.

At the completion of this program, I ask the participants to evaluate their experience. Specifically I ask if they see their SELF any differently now than before experiencing this program. One of many memorable responses was this. "Yes, I do. Our neighbors have a boat and I always thought that made them better than us. I asked Dad to buy us a boat, but he didn't. Finally he bought us a boat and it was bigger and better than our neighbor's. I was glad and I thought it made us better than them. Now I know that we are not better than our neighbor just because we have a better boat. But I'm sure glad we have the boat." What a great sharing Obviously, the Insights taught were not fully integrated, but this person had moved a long way down the path of understanding to the realization that things do not better people make.

The absence of pleasure in living comes from the unwillingness and/or inability to see life realistically. It's the unwillingness to live reality as it is and instead demand that it be something it is not. The focus of this Insight is to help the participants clarify, and perhaps, change some of their vision of reality. We will try to accomplish this through a closer examination of how we talk to our SELF about living.

Imagine two identical twins. They both possess the same exact physical features and they both enjoy many and the same performance skills. Each has the benefit of the same physical environment. Supposedly the fullness with which they live life would also be the same. Not so. Somehow our imaginary twins have learned different lyrics to the same music of life. One reacts to life. The other acts with life. For example, both received a "B" in English. Norman, the nonsensical neurotic, insists, "I should have gotten an 'A'," and flies into a rage. Robert, the rational rascal, assertively states,

"I think I earned an 'A'," and with disappointment (not anger) he goes forth nervously (not fearfully) determined to present his case to the teacher. Later, when the boys discuss the matter witn their father (neither grade was changed), Norman aggressively reacts to the situation and catastrophisizes that a "terrible and awful injustice" has been perpetrated on him. (He is, by the way, later sent to his room for attempting to magically change the teacher from a human being into a "creep and a freak".) Robert, on the other hand, explains that it is "an unfortunate situation" and he feels "irritated". He shares his plan to pursue the matter further, but if no change in his grade results, "Such is life. Nobody promised me a rose garden." Later, as the boys discuss the matter together in their room, Norman overgeneralizes that, "This sort of thing always happens to me. I never get a break. Everyone is out to get me," and he throws his shoe through the window as if to awaken the world to the pain it has caused him. Robert reflects on his past and admits that "some misfortune has also come to me," and "A 'break' is a matter of chance that sometimes happens and sometimes doesn't," and "There are some people who don't cherish my existence either." He begins working on a plan to achieve his goal of an "A" in English while Norman is sent to the hardware store to purchase a new window with his allowance.

The difference between these two imaginary boys is their vision of life and the way they talk about living. Robert does not see his value as a human being as welded to his performance in English. Excellence in English is a desirable goal as opposed to a condition for SELF acceptance. He realizes failure to achieve that goal has not substantially changed him one iota. Therefore, he is able to concentrate on the problem (a possible misrepresentation of his performance and not waste energy protecting a fractured SELF (which hasn't been fractured). Norman believes his very value is attached to that grade and, therefore, aggressively tries to protect his SELF. He believes the teacher has diminished his value and so he tries to diminish the teacher's value ("She's a creep and a freak."). His hostile emotions and behaviors also spring from his belief that a real catastrophe has befallen him ("terrible and awful") rather than one of life's surprises. He verbalizes, in overgeneralized terms, his confused perception of his life ("always, never, everyone") and, not surprisingly, experiences strong negative emotions which he acts out with strong negative behavior.

The point of this imaginary tale (founded on true life experiences) is that we talk our SELF into our emotional states and resulting behaviors. Anyone who chooses to see an event (or person or thing) as "terrible and awful" will, no doubt, experience strong, appropriate (though negative) feelings.

Our life rests not in our hands, but in our minds. Recently my wife and I sat in a restaurant, Julie with a partially eaten piece of pie in front of her. She had admittedly given up on it so I pulled it toward my SELF explaining, "Let's not let this go to waste." With eagerness and relish I began to devour the

pie, savoring every bite, and somehow, according to my childhood memories, securing my future through "waste not want not" as well as supersaturating my desire for pie. In mid-third-fork-full, Julie reminded me I had the right word but the wrong spelling and that extra pie certainly would go to waist, my waist. The pleasure and enjoyment turned to doubt and hesitation. What had been a delicious experience "magically" turned into a pile of calories. The feelings I experienced came not from the pie but from what I came to believe about the pie. The stronger the positive attitude ("Oh boy! This is great! Extra yummy pie."), the stronger the positive feelings. The stronger the negative attitude ("Oh no! Awful calories! Fat City! She always reminds me of that. I never get to gorge my SELF."), the stronger the negative feelings. As just a bit of added insight, a sure-fire way to become really upset is to blame your feelings and behavior on someone else. The choice as to whether or not I want to eat the pie (and take on the calories) is mine. If I say, "She always reminds me," and "She ruins my fun," and "It's her fault," I talk like I am powerless to weigh the facts (excuse the pun) and make a decision. This nonsense belief in my own powerlessness leads to hostile feelings and behavior.

The life process given earlier is important to the understanding of Insight #3, also. (1) Something happens. (2) Think and talk about what happened. (3) Experience an emotional response. (4) Act or react. Step #2 (think and talk) is the gateway through which the other two steps flow. The activities and exercises of this Insight focus on the development of a more specific understanding of what we say to our SELF to talk our SELF into an emotional state. Some comments on several of these activities may be helpful.

A distinction is made between ACTORS and REACTORS. A reactor is one who reacts to life because of a failure to believe in the intrinsic goodness and value that exists in all of us. Reactors believe the value is earned and lost and, therefore, react to those believed changes. Human value is seen as a commodity that rises and falls like a market stock -- support increases the value, lack of support decreases the value. Of course, there is some reactor and some actor in all of us. The activities and exercises are used to demonstrate that a choice is possible and to explain that the choice is based on how we think and talk about our SELF and our environment.

I like to use cartoons to illustrate this choice. "Peanuts" cartoons of Charles Schultz are especially good since Charlie Brown so often chooses to be a reactor when he places his value in the hands of others. He insists on their affirmation of his goodness rather than believing in his own intrinsic goodness. He almost begs for the love and approval of others by trying to meet their performance and appearance standards. Of course, more often than not, he receives rejection and stumbles through life believing he is a hopeless nogoodnik and feeling down in the dumps. His value and his emotional condition are made the

responsibility of others with the undying hope that someday, somehow, they will give him a meaningful and happy existence.

The actor in us steps forward when we choose to write our own human value and emotional condition ticket. Actors live life according to a sensible, well-understood script. As persons, things and events evolve in life, actors don't react uncontrollably to them but rather act rationally with them according to a well-defined sense of intrinsic goodness. Life is viewed realistically, not hopelessly.

Again cartoons provide a good visualization of the actor concept. Even Charlie Brown, on occasion, is an actor. As others unhesitantly point out his many weaknesses and failings, he simply, honestly and non-defensively admits to his own imperfections. Actors don't use energy proving they have a right to exist (remember "Desiderata?"), proving their value or seeking the constant approval of others.

The purpose of the actor-reactor exercise in the student notebook is to point out that when we have a clear image of our intrinsic goodness, we can act out that image. When we have a confused and distorted image, we depend (even insist) that the significant and insignificant persons, things and events in our life give us that desired goodness. The result is a reaction to whatever that "giving" might be ("You have made me so happy," or "You have ruined my life!").

Ellis (Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy, 1962), identifies 11 irrational beliefs that can lead to emotional pain and, when practiced, will assure a place in the reactors hall of fame. In the interest of time and simplicity, this program focuses on only some of the specific words and beliefs included in some of these 11 irrational beliefs rather than presenting them in their entirety. Gerald Kranzler in his book, You Can Change How You Feel, 1974, provides an effective summary of these beliefs which is used as the format for an exercise ("Get your act together") in this program. I recommend you refer to these two books, but the following explanation may be sufficient to teach the concept.

Returning to the notion that we can either react to life or act with life, words demonstrate how that choice is made. When we overgeneralize about life rather than talk about life realistically, we react. Overgeneralizations happen when we speak all inclusively. Words like "never, everyone and always" serve as examples, but there are many more. Anyone who believes "I never get a break," "I always mess up," and "Everyone hates me," is doomed to react to life. It would be very difficult (impossible?) to act harmoniously and sensibly with that kind of a view of the world. The challenge is to see life realistically and talk about it sensibly. "Never" is more than one could realistically be expected to cope with (that's like fighting a monster with a twig). "Seldom" or "not as often as I would like" or "infrequently" provide a view that leaves hope and the belief that "I can cope with this situation."

As I sit down to put this program together, I have many ways to view my effort. If I tell my SELF (and anyone willing to listen), "I'll never finish it! I'm always running into snags! Everyone is constantly providing distractions," I will feel beaten, hopeless, anxious, whiney and depressed. Writing would be very difficult if not impossible. If I change those nonsense beliefs to, "This is taking much longer than I anticipated," and "I'm finding more snags than I envisioned," and "I sometimes get distracted," I can cope with that and continue plodding along -- sometimes discouraged but not hopelessly lost.

Reactors are made, not born. Another sure-fire way to become a reactor is to catastrophize about life, i.e., to talk your SELF into a view of living that is very difficult at best and impossible at worst. Epictetus, the ancient philosopher, wrote "Men are disturbed not by things, but by the views they take of them." The person who views life's events as "terrible" and "awful" and "more than I can stand," is sure to experience an unhappy existence. I believe nothing is awful or terrible ("only our views make them so"), but to make this concept easier to present, I define several things or events as awful and/or terrible. This provides a reference point or a realistic comparison. There are many things and events that could be used, but I offer the following three "catastrophies": The Bubonic Plague, World War I and World War II. A reaction to life results when we put life's surprises into the same category as these three events. "This has been an awful summer! Nothing but rain! It's terrible! I can't stand it when it rains!" Who could have any fun with that sort of image of the summer? The view that a rainy summer is as catastrophic as the Bubonic Plague will result in misery and depression, no doubt about it. A healthier view, a more facilitative view of life is, "This summer is not what I had hoped for. I'm disappointed, but I'm creative enough to find or create pleasure in any kind of weather." The truth is, the only thing we truly "can't stand" is something that results in death, like poison or a bullet to the heart or a steamroller passing directly over the body. Everything else is simply a degree of unpleasantness, not what I wanted, unfortunate, etc.

We set our SELF up for misery and we become a full-fledged reactor to life when we demand that a reality exist. Life is based on conditions. When particular conditions exist, a related event will happen -- no doubt about it. Given particular atmospheric conditions, rain will result. To say, "It shouldn't rain so much in the summer," is ridiculous. It should if the conditions exist. To say, "I shouldn't have this much trouble writing," is ridiculous. If troublesome conditions exist, I will have trouble. Sensibly, one either changes (or attempts to change) the conditions or chooses to live contently with the results. Sensible alternatives are: "I would like to be taller," as opposed to "I should be taller," and "I would like to not be so nervous in front of other people," as opposed to "I shouldn't be so nervous" Use the energy to change the conditions leading to the nervousness (assuming you want to

be less nervous) rather than to deny the reality ("I shouldn't be nervous") that you are.

A final example in this reactor's guide to life is to deny responsibility for one's own feelings. Gerald Kranzler (You Can Change How You Feel, 1974) refers to this as "Copping Out."

The belief that "He makes me angry," not only places the responsibility wrongly, it leaves one without control of one's own emotional state. It's a helpless, hopeless and nonsensical thing to do. "I feel angry," is a simple and honest admission of a feeling. The benefit of this realistic view is: "Since it is my anger, I caused it, I can do something about it if I choose." To find the cause, simply ask your SELF, "What am I telling my SELF about what happened (person, thing or event) that would have resulted in my feeling angry?" Challenge the words, thoughts, beliefs, etc. Negative emotional states can be avoided when and if you realize they belong to you, seek their source (attitudes, thoughts, etc.) and challenge that source.

Take your time with Insight #3. Enjoy discovering and challenging the source of personal distress. Be inventive and creative in discovering rational alternatives to the nonsensical negative beliefs we all carry around in our attitudinal backpack. Challenge the participants to become fully alive by taking responsibility for their own lives.

INSIGHT #3: I take charge of my life when I choose to think sensibly about my SELF, about others, and ABOUT ALL THE THINGS AND EVENTS IN MY LIFE.

PRESENTER: On Page 17 of your notebook is the word 'Insight #3'. Please write it on the blank provided as I write it on the board.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE

A. Lincoln SAID, "Everyone IS JUST ABOUT AS HAPPY AS THEY CHOOSE TO BE."

E. Roosevelt SAID, "No one can make you feel INFERIOR WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT."

I SAID, "_____."

EXPLANATION: Quotations are helpful in presenting this insight. To think sensibly about SELF and the world is no small challenge. Anyone who is willing to "speak" to this challenge is certainly invited. There are many quotations you may prefer to use that will serve the same purpose. I like the two in this exercise and experience demonstrates that the participants have received them well. One day I chatted with a student that had participated in this program five years previously. She told me of an incident she observed where a larger and older boy was intimidating another. She said she marched up to the two boys, looked the younger one right in the eye and said, "Mr. Hanel said that guy can't make you feel inferior without your consent!" (Sorry, Eleanor, but as long as your life-supporting thought is immortalized does it really matter who said it?). I was pleased to discover that this concept had been so strongly included in her thinking and that she willingly shared it with others. It's a useful and challenging belief to the debilitating and nonsensical belief that other people can make you feel inferior.

Any quotations that support the belief that we are responsible for the condition of our lives will probably be useful. They help to demonstrate the validity of the Insight presented.

Invite the participants to make their own "motto" or belief in support of this insight. You may be surprised at the quality of their contributions like, "Perceive! Believe! Achieve!"

PRESENTER: I want you to understand that this Insight is not something I just made up, but is believed and supported by many others. Write these quotations in your notebook on Page 17 as I write them on the board and then we will discuss them. First, Abraham Lincoln said . . .

I want you to make up your own motto and write that in the space provided. Use your imagination. Be creative. How else can you say you are responsible for how you feel about your SELF and the condition of your life? It's not necessary to complete this exercise today but everyone enter some quotation by _____.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: DON'T PUT YOUR VALUE IN SOMEONE ELSE'S HANDS

On a scale of 10-0 (10 is "terrific" and "0" is "yucky"), how do you usually feel about your SELF? _____

What keeps you from getting higher? ____

Any response that indicates an understanding of the refusal to think sensibly about one's own value is acceptable.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

Think and talk more sensibly. Be responsible FOR MY OWN VALUE. DON'T GIVE THAT RESPONSIBILITY AWAY.

EXPLANATION: The purpose of this exercise is to determine if the participants understand the concept that feelings about SELF are our own responsibility. We are not "put down" by the persons, things and events in our lives, but by the beliefs we have about our SELF in relation to those persons, things and events. A person may choose to say something insulting. It is our choice as to whether or not we want to feel insulted, hurt, vengeful, etc. The old children's adage is very

true, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." Unfortunately, while we were learning this helpful little ditty, we were also learning less helpful, and contradictory beliefs like: "It hurts me when you insult me," (rather than "I feel hurt") and "You insulted me," (rather than "I feel insulted," and "That makes me angry," (rather than "I feel angry.").

Use this exercise to point out these important distinctions. How we feel is our responsibility. If you want to feel insulted, go ahead. Enjoy it even, but don't blame others for the intrinsic response which is your choice. This distinction is very important because, as will be pointed out in the Activities to follow, if it is your feeling and you don't like it, you have the power to do something about it. Conversely, if you believe others caused your feeling you are stuck and the quality of your life rests in the hands of others.

What can you do about how you feel about your SELF? Plenty! Take responsibility. Recognize that you have a choice about what you say to your SELF about your value. Don't abdicate your emotional throne. You are the ruler in the land of your own SELF esteem.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: HAVE YOU "TWEEKED YOUR CHEEK" TODAY?

EXPLANATION: In the "Fully Human, Fully Alive" workshop presented by John Powell, he demonstrated "tweeking your cheek". I include it in this program because (1) It's fun and (2) It can be an indicator of how accepting you are of your SELF, how strongly you believe in your own goodness. To tweek your cheek you look your SELF square in the eyes in a mirror, grab your cheek between your thumb and forefinger and with a gentle pinch (tweek) you say with all the sincerity you can muster, "I love you, you rascal you. Let's spend all the rest of our days together." Any such caring and endearing phrase will do. Encourage the participants to try it. The presentation might go like this.

PRESENTER: "How many of you tweeked your cheek this morning? None of you? How can you start your day off without tweeking your cheek? Let me demonstrate what it is and tomorrow morning I want all of you to try it.

Imagine I'm looking in the bathroom mirror. I'm already to get some breakfast but before I do I look my SELF square in the eyes, pinch, really tweek, my cheek like this and say to my SELF, "Good morning, you wonderful person. It's going to be great to spend the day with you."

You laugh. Don't you believe I can say that to my SELF? It's called SELF affirmation. I like compliments. Why wait for someone else to say something nice to me when I'm right there to do it?

When you first try it you may want to keep the bathroom door closed. People don't "normally" speak gently and kindly to their SELF so observers may think you're strange. But, that's their problem. Don't make it your problem. If you find you can't tweek your cheek and speak warmly to your SELF, it may mean you don't think well enough of your SELF yet. That means you have lots more work to do on SELF acceptance. Tomorrow I'm going to check and see how many of you tweeked your cheek."

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: A CELEBRATION OF THE JOY OF BEING ME

EXPLANATION: The purpose of this exercise is to get the participants to identify all their extrinsic qualities they see as positive. (NOTE: Those qualities, of course, don't <u>give</u> value, but they may be valued.)

Ask them to make a list. The goal is to fill at least two sides of notebook paper. The items can include anything from the smallest, "least significant", characteristics to the very largest. This list will not be shared unless a participant is willing to do so.

For encouragement and explanation, it is a good idea for the presenter to first share his/her list. My list of things I like about me include such items as: My sense of humor, my beard, my shoe size,

my golf grip, the scrambled eggs I can cook and "I'm attractive".

Anything counts. The purpose is to let the participants know it is O.K. to speak well of their SELF. Usually some resistance to this exercise is expressed: "That's bragging! I'm not going to brag about my SELF." Bragging occurs when a person compares her SELF. Bragging occurs when a person compares her SELF with another to point out greater value and/or to lessen the value of the other (as if that were possible). To the contrary, this is simply taking inventory of one's SELF and recognizing the assets. I can say, "I'm attractive" even if I'm not the most attractive in all the world. I can say, "I like my hair" even if it's not the best hair in the room. I can say, "I have a good golf grip" even if it doesn't meet the standards of a "good" golf grip -- which it doesn't.

As in the previous exercise, this will be a difficult exercise if (1) There is low SELF esteem, (2) There is the strong belief that only the best is good enough. Nonsense! Low SELF esteem comes to those who practice low SELF esteem. Let's practice high SELF esteem.

It's fun exercise. Encourage the group to take the risk.

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: BE AN ACTOR OR A REACTOR - IT'S A DECISION.

AN ACTOR IS -- Someone who is in emotional control of his/her own life.

A REACTOR IS -- Someone who is emotionally controlled by others.

CARTOON #1

WHO IS IN CONTROL? _____

IS THE PERSON AN ACTOR OR REACTOR? _____

CARTOON #2

WHO IS IN CONTROL? _____

IS THE PERSON AN ACTOR OR REACTOR? _____

CARTOON # 3

WHO IS IN CONTROL? _____

IS THE PERSON AN ACTOR OR REACTOR? _____

CARTOON #4

WHO IS IN CONTROL? _____

IS THE PERSON AN ACTOR OR REACTOR? _____

AN EXAMPLE: MOTHER SAYS, "TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE." IT'S YOUR BROTHER'S JOB.

WHAT DO YOU SAY AND DO? _____

_____

WHO IS IN CONTROL? _____

ARE YOU AN ACTOR OR REACTOR? _____

A TRUE LIFE EXAMPLE: _____

_____

WHAT DID YOU SAY AND DO? _____

_____

WHO WAS IN CONTROL? _____

WERE YOU AN ACTOR OR A REACTOR? _____

EXPLANATION: There is a popular euphemism that goes, "Get your act together." That is what being an actor is all about. It simply refers to a person who is in emotional control of SELF. A reactor is one who is emotionally controlled by others. Therefore, reactors say, "You make me angry!" Actors say, "I am angry." Both experience anger but the actor takes responsibility and the actor is in control. Actors recognize the choice to be angry. They don't put their SELF esteem in the hands of others. Reactors rely on, insist on, their SELF affirmation from others, "Please love me. Tell me I'm good. Convince me I have value." As discussed in the introduction to this Insight, I use cartoons to teach this concept. I especially like Charles Schultz's "Peanuts" because Charlie Brown is such a

good example of a reactor. Also, I think these cartoons are relatable. I also use cartoons from the daily newspaper comic strips taking care to choose examples of both actors and reactors.

These cartoons can be presented on transparencies one square at a time so as to be able to emphasize and evaluate the words, facial expressions, body language, etc., that give the clues to discovering whether the person is an actor or reactor.

Encourage the participants to bring cartoons from home and ask them to present them to the group, offering their own interpretations.

Also included in this activity is a "typical" everyday example in which the participants are asked to choose whether they would act or react.

PRESENTER: "Now we have finished with the cartoons. Let's use a more real life example. Your parent asks you to take out the garbage. It's really your brother's or sister's job but you're the only one at home. What do you say? What do you do? Who is in control? Do you choose to be an actor or a reactor?

(STUDENT: I say, 'I'm not going to do it. It's not my job.' I keep doing what I'm doing.)

O.K., you have a right to refuse. But with that right comes a responsibility to accept the consequences for that decision. What does your Mom say to that refusal?

(STUDENT: She says, "Don't get smart with me, Buster. Take out the garbage or I'll send you to your room.")

Sounds like Mom is reacting. What do you do?

(STUDENT: I get mad. She shouldn't send me to my room for not doing my brother's job.)

She can if she does. Don't confuse reality with morality. It sounds like

you're talking about what you believe to be right or wrong. I'm not teaching morality. I'm teaching reality. If your Mom has the power to send you to your room, if she can create the conditions, then that's where you're going to go and you're going to go there angrily becuase you believe she shouldn't -- "She has no right." Are you in emotional control of your SELF? Are you an actor or a reactor?

(STUDENT: I'm in control. I didn't take out the garbage.)

You won the battle but you lost the war -- or at least you lost control of your SELF. My guess is that unless you like being sent to your room, you feel very upset. What was otherwise a pleasant evening has now become the pits. You're feeling miserable. Mom's feeling miserable. The only thing not suffering is the garbage. You reacted. You believed this event (taking out the garbage) was unfair. "It's terrible to have to do my brother's job! I can't stand doing his work for him! Only a weakling would give in to that kind of request." Because of that kind of thinking you reacted in order to protect your SELF from a believed gross "unfairness" and the loss of SELF respect that would certainly follow. That kind of thinking doesn't make sense and it results in misery. The event (the garbage) was viewed as bigger than your SELF. It's not. It's insignificant in comparison.

Let's hear some other ways you might handle this situation. The question is not so much what you do (do you take out the garbage or not), because that's between you and your parents, but how do you choose to feel about what you do.

(STUDENT: I'd take the garbage out.)

How would you feel about it?

(STUDENT: I guess I wouldn't like it but it's no big deal to take out the garbage.)

O.K., this is a really important difference because George thinks it's a big deal. The issue is not taking out the garbage. The issue is what do you think about taking out the garbage.

So, Carol, who is in control? Remember, I'm not talking about physical control, I'm talking about emotional control. I'm talking about the way you choose to live this particular experience in your life.

(STUDENT: I guess I am. I'm not going to get bent out of shape about a trip to the garbage can.)

(STUDENT: Does that mean that I have to do what people tell me if I want to be in control?)

No. It means that if you choose to refuse, you have to willingly accept the consequences of your decision to refuse. "Mom, I'm sorry but it's not my job and I'm not going to take out the garbage." And Mom says, "There goes your allowance, you will be cut out of the will and your room will be boarded up. From now on you will sleep in the garage." And you say, "Let me think about those consequences and I'll get right back to you." That example is a little bit absurd, but the point is you can <u>assert</u> your SELF. Mom can ask, or tell, you what to do. You can refuse. Both of you have the ability to discuss, negotiate, problem solve, etc. Reactors say, "This is the pits!" Actors say, "This is a challenge, an opportunity to use my brain, an opportunity to be creative."

Go ahead and fill in the blank with what you would do. Be honest. If you would react, say so. Recognition of the reactor in you is also a valuable insight.

EXPLANATION: The last example in this activity asks that the participants write about a true incident in their lives. Share an example of your own and then ask them to write in their example.

PRESENTER: "The other day a teacher told me he didn't think counselors played a very important role in schools and the district could save the taxpayers a lot of money by getting rid of us. At first I felt rather defensive, I think even a little hostile. But then I thought and I said, "I appreciate your interest

in my work. *I don't agree with you* but I would be interested in knowing why you think what I do is not important."

Who was in control? Was I an actor or a reactor?

(STUDENT: You were in control and you were an actor. Why did he say counselors weren't important?)

He said he was just kidding me. He wanted to find out if I practice what I preached.

EXPLANATION: a final comment

Obviously this is a difficult concept to teach. Take your time. Use plenty of examples. Remember especially that being an actor takes practice (so does being a reactor). It demands that we re-train our thinking.

There will be many opportunities during the presentation of this material to evaluate interactions. Don't miss the opportunity to teach and practice being an actor rather than a reactor.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER. YOU CAN DO IT!

REACTING TO LIFE VS	ACTING WITH LIFE
OVERGENERALIZING	
"NEVER"	seldom, not often
"EVERYONE"	some, few, many
"ALWAYS"	sometimes, often
_____	_____
CATASTROPHIZING	
"TERRIBLE"	not what I'd hoped
"AWFUL"	inconvenient
"I CAN'T STAND IT"	I don't like it
_____	_____
DEMANDING	
"SHOULD, MUST"	I wish. I prefer
"COPPING OUT"	
"HE MAKES ME MAD"	I feel angry.
_____	_____

EXPLANATION: This exercise requires little explanation beyond that offered in the introduction to this Insight. It simply places a variety of words into four catergories: Overgeneralizing, Catastrophizing, Demanding

and "Copping Out". The enthusiastic application of these words to the persons, things and events of one's life is guaranteed to bring an instant reaction. Anyone desiring to significantly lower the quality of his life is encouraged to practice the use of these words at every opportunity.

Conversely, those looking for greater satisfaction in living are encouraged to challenge these nonsense words and practice using more sensible, rational alternatives. The alternatives offered in this exercise are only samples. There are many more. For example, sensible alternatives to "awful" could include "disappointing" or "surprising" or "unexpected" or whatever else your sensible mind discovers as a realistic view.

It's one thing to know the rational alternatives. It's quite another to use them. That takes practice. This exercise provides a rather low level of learning -- memorization. To apply these rational alternatives takes activities not specifically provided in this program. However, this can be provided during daily presentations by challenging the day-to-day conversation of the participants. For example, when someone says, "This is awful," it is helpful to counter with something like, "Is this really as great a catastrophe as the Bubonic Plague or do you just not like it?" Be an actor. Take control. How could you more sensibly describe this event?

At first you may get some grumblings, but with enough encouragement and practice you will more frequently hear, "This is not what I expected," or "I would prefer not to have to do this," or some other rational alternative to "This is awful!"

As you go through this exercise be creative in the use of your examples. However, move through it rather quickly because both the words and concept will be reinforced in an activity in Insight #4. This activity is a drama and many

past participants have shared that it serves to clarify this exercise (and raise it from memorization to application).

INSIGHT #4: HOW I EXPERIENCE LIVING IS THE RESULT OF MY VISION OF LIFE.

Explanation of the Insight

The distinction between Insights #3 and #4 is only a matter of scope. Here the focus will include a broader view of how we cause our emotional condition by what John Powell refers to as a "vision of life" (Fully Human, Fully Alive, 1976). The nonsensical words presented previously are an integral part of this Insight as we attempt to help the participants discover that they have, indeed, developed a vision of life on which acceptance of reality and the emotional condition are based.

This vision of life is like an inheritance given to all of us, certainly by our parents, but also by numerous other persons (neighbors, relatives, teachers, etc.) and from experiences like television, movies, advertisements, etc. The basis of this vision is developed early in life but is changing and changeable. My parents frequently told me (and demonstrated) that "Anything worth doing is worth doing well." To this day, though I claim to have a "laid back", noncompetitive attitude, I frequently and obsessively strive to do well; and, I often feel anger, disappointment and resentment when I don't ("I should have done better. That was terrible! What a nogoodnik I am for having done so poorly."). This is not to say that my parents are responsible for my negative reaction every time I perform less than perfectly but rather to point out that because of this learned vision of a slice of life, I often do feel negative reactions when I perform less than perfectly. As a responsible, mature, reasonably intelligent person, I have it within my power to challenge this belief, this vision ("Anything worth doing is worth doing well") and take charge of the quality of my life. The challenge: There are many things worth doing just to be doing them (never mind, "well"). How about golf just for exercise, companionship or a change of pace? How about growing a garden just to make a patch of weeds in the back yard look better? How about writing up a SELF Image Program just to try and share the ideas with others? If these, and many other things, are not done well, only the foolish goose would want to see them as a condemnation of human value rather than a simple lack of sufficient effort or a lack of ability to do them better. The negative reaction is in the vision. It is not in the failure to do well.

While it is not part of my nature, it is part of my learned way of living to be nice to others and to gererally be inoffensive in my relationships. Less often now than in the past, my common response to the request of others was, "Yes." After all, I didn't want them to feel disappointed. angered, etc. (an irrational and magical belief that I could cause those feelings). My vision of my SELF in relation to others

dictated that I say "Yes" more often than not. Now I frequently try to challenge that vision with an alternative view by saying, "I can't think of one good reason why I would want to do that (Thank you, Gerald Kranzler)." If I come up with a good reason or if a good reason is offered, I say, "Yes." If not, the answer is "No." (Sorry if you choose to upset your SELF about that.) This is not to say I no longer care about my relationship with others and nondiscriminately and noncaringly interact with friends, associates and strangers. It means I no longer <u>believe</u> I must <u>always</u> serve the expectations of others. This is no longer my vision of how to live a healthy life. It means I no longer believe I am responsible for the emotional condition of others. It means I no longer believe I must be loved and approved of by <u>all</u> others in order to love and approve of my SELF. It means I'm working at changing my vision.

The point of not being responsible for another's emotional condition sometimes results in confusion so it's important that it be presented clearly. A brief elaboration may be helpful. The key consideration is "intent". If a request is made and the response is "stick it in your ear", clearly the <u>intent</u> is to be offensive and the person refused will likely feel offended. The responsibility for the emotional reaction is shared (even though <u>not</u> caused). If the <u>intent</u> is to simply and honestly offer a refusal ("No thank you. I don't choose to do that.") and the person refused feels upset, then the emotional response is totally the responsibility of that person. This distinction is important because this program does not advocate a "do your own thing and the heck with the rest of the world" attitude or vision of life. The intent is to teach that through our visions of our SELF and the world we are often open to manipulation by the emotional reactions of others, and, therefore, behave in debilitative ways because we <u>believe</u> we caused the emotional reaction. While it is true we can only hurt our SELF emotionally, where there is an intent to bring pain, there is also a shared responsibility.

The Activities of Insight #4 provide the participants an opportunity to discover and examine their visions of life. For everyone, much of that vision is healthy -- thank goodness. I offer that literally. Because of the intrinsic goodness in all of us, much of our inherited vision of life is healthy and facilitative. However, some of all of our visions are a many-headed monster that result in all kinds of confusion, frustration, unhappiness and anxiety, to name just a few negative emotional states. It's important that the participants understand and appreciate their healthy visions and see this program as an opportunity to discover and challenge the few but debilitating unhealthy ones.

INSIGHT #4: HOW I EXPERIENCE LIVING IS THE RESULT OF MY VISION OF LIFE.

PRESENTER: On Page 19 of your notebook is the word "Insight #4". Please write the Insight on the blank provided while I write it on the board.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: TWO MEN LOOKED OUT FROM PRISON BARS
ONE SAW MUD
THE OTHER SAW STARS (FULLY HUMAN, FULLY ALIVE, 1976)

WHAT SYMBOL (MUD, STARS, ETC.) COULD YOU USE TO SHOW THE VISION YOU HAVE OF LIFE?

_____

EXPLANATION: This poem is used to introduce the meaning of a vision of life. The two prisoners looked out the bars at the same reality. The difference was in their perception of what they saw -- mud vs. stars. They shared the same circumstance but they did not share the same vision of those circumstances.

As in previous Exercises, personal examples are encouraged as a method of presenting the concept. One day, when our son was quite young, we walked out to the car together and there was a pop bottle someone had left on our yard. I thought, "Some inconsiderate boob has littered our yard." Our son said, "Oh, boy! That bottle is worth a nickel. Can I have it?" Our vision of exactly the same circumstances (reality) was different. I saw litter and he saw a nickel. The result of our visions were different, too. He was happy. I was upset. I know people who see "diamonds" in mud puddles. Have you ever seen the sun reflect off a mud puddle with a twinkle? I know people who see mud puddles as a reflection of the county's inability to keep the roads in good repair. The fullness of life lies in the vision, not in mud puddles. Persons, things and events don't give us happiness or cause us grief. Our vision is our choice and so is the resulting emotional experience.

This Exercise helps the participants focus on their vision of life, at least

in a generalized view. The Exercise to follow specifically shows how negative, "muddy visions", can be challenged and changed.

Ask the participants to fill in the blank with a symbol that represents their usual vision of life.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE:

"MUD"	VS.	"STARS"
WEIRD		UNIQUE, UNUSUAL, DIFFERENT
LIFE IS A JUNGLE		LIFE IS A CHALLENGE, DECISION
YOU MAKE ME . . .		YOU CAN'T MAKE ME STINK
THIS IS TERRIBLE		THIS IS NOT WHAT I EXPECTED
NEVER		HARDLY EVER
YOU EMBARRASS ME		I FEEL EMBARRASSED
I'M BORED BY THIS		I'M CREATIVE ENOUGH TO MAKE THIS INTERESTING
WHAT A CREEP		WHAT AN UNUSUAL PERSON
THAT'S NOT FAIR		THAT'S NOT WHAT I EXPECTED
ALWAYS		SOMETIMES

EXPLANATION: The examples in this exercise certainly do not exhaust all the possible negative, debilitative, muddy visions and their alternatives. These are only a sample intended as a catalyst to further discovery and challenge. The sample, I believe, is large enough to demonstrate the process.

The personal sharings of the presenter will facilitate the participants' understanding. The presentation might go like this.

PRESENTER: "The Insight says that your vision of reality will determine how much fun you have in living life. You can discover your vision by listening to how you talk about life. This includes what you say about your SELF and about other persons, things and events. Let's look at the examples of "Mud" and "Star" visions. Some of these will be familiar to you already.

The first one is "weird". When I grew up my parents taught me that all people are equal. They told me skin color made no difference. So I think I grew up with little prejudice about races. However, I did learn some prejudice about what was "normal" and acceptable appearance and behavior in people in general. Let me give you an example of a prejudice I

learned and practiced. Do you know about "Hippies"? They were young people, late teens and early twenties, who decided to "drop out" of the established society. They didn't get haircuts, they wore different kinds of clothes (when they wore clothes) and they protested many of the events that were happening in this country in the 60's and 70's. Their appearance and their lifestyle was so different from anything I had experienced, I thought they were "WEIRD". "Weird" is a negative judgment and it results in negative feelings. I prefer not to have negative feelings so how could I have described "Hippies" without including a negative judgment?

(STUDENT: Maybe you were right. Maybe they were weird. My Dad thinks they were. I know some weird people right here in this school.)

No. I was wrong and so are you. the word "weird" tells you something about my vision of other people. It tells you I believe that people who are <u>different</u>, people who are <u>unusual</u>, people who are <u>unique</u> have something wrong with them. They don't meet the standard. They're inferior. They're weird. I don't want to have that vision of people. Help me to change it. How can I talk about people who are <u>different</u> without putting them down? How can I describe their appearance and behavior without trying to attack their human value?

(STUDENT: My mom says people have a right to be different. She thinks it makes the world more interesting to have different kinds of people.)

What do you think?

(STUDENT: I agree with her. I don't think people who are different are weird.)

You and your Mom have a healthy vision of people. You probably have already discovered that the difference in people is only in their appearance and behavior. Underneath, in the human value, everyone has two tons of human worth.

How about the rest of you? Do you label people, give them titles intended to reduce their value as human beings? What's a more positive way to view people who are not just like you are?

NOTE: Continue the discussion until the group arrives at some alternative, positive views. Words like unique, unusual and different are offered as suggestion. These words focus on the difference, not on the human value.

Let's go on to the next one, "Life's a jungle." Have you ever had that view of life shared with you? "I'm telling you, it's a jungle out there. You had better study hard, get a good job and claim your fair share of the forest because it's a jungle out there." Have you ever heard anything like that? Anyone with that kind of vision of life will either be afraid to live or will be ready to stampede the elephants to get to whatever is desired.

I one time heard a story about Tarzan who, swinging from a vine, came home to his tree house after a hard day in the jungle. Jane greeted him with a tall glass of lemonade and said, "How was your day, Tarzan?" He said, "It's a jungle out there, Jane."

Tarzan, or anyone else living in the jungle, is the only one who can sensibly make that statement. For everyone else, "Life is a jungle" only reflects a negative view of living. Of course, life is filled with unexpected surprises and challenges and sometimes life can be difficult, but it is not a jungle filled with awesome threats and insurmountable difficulties. You can think that way if you like, but it reflects a negative vision. It is not healthy and it's not much fun.

Sometimes the view of life as a jungle is not stated so clearly. The other day I asked a student if she had much homework. She looked at me as if the weight of the world rested on her shoulders and said sadly, "I have tons of homework." Does that sound like a jungle vision of life?

"TONS!" I imagined eight elephants lined up in front of the schcol being loaded up with her homework. Poor thing. She probably had a challenging amount of homework, maybe even more than she could reasonably complete in one evening, but certainly not "tons". Who wouldn't feel beaten by that sort of vision?

Let me hear from you. How do you see life? What are some healthy alternatives to "Life is a jungle?"

EXPLANATION: a final comment — Continue through the list of "Mud vs. Star" visions. At this point the participants will be fairly well versed in looking for alternatives so let them take the leadership. You may want them to first try to complete the list in pencil and then review their responses, having them make any necessary corrections.

(NOTEBOOK) ACTIVITY: The S-M-I-L-E Play (see appendix)

THE LETTERS IN THE WORD "SMILE" STAND FOR STEPS IN A LIFE PROCESS. CAN YOU FIGURE OUT THE WORDS?

S SOMETHING HAPPENS

M MONSTERS

I I FEEL

L LIKEABLE THOUGHTS

E EXPECT MORE OF YOUR SELF

Can you identify the "Monsters" presented in the play?

SHOULD MONSTER	ALWAYS, NEVER, FOREVER MONSTER
AWFUL MONSTER	LABELING LIZARD
TERRIBLE MONSTER	BLAMING BUZZARD

EXPLANATION: This play is offered for the purpose of final clarification and reinforcement of several past activities. The play, as you will determine by reading it, involves two children, an owl and many "monsters". The "monsters" represent

various negative beliefs that reflect a negative vision that result in negative experiences with life. The play is intended to be informative but also fun. The greater the enthusiasm of the actors, the greater their willingness to be "dramatic" and just a little hammy, the more effective the presentation seems to be.

There are several ways this play might be presented. First, the participants might be assigned roles and the play could be a group activity. In the interest of time, due to the probable need to practice reading the script, I have not presented it in this manner. A second method, if a drama class is available and if the teacher is willing, is to have the play presented by the drama class. I have used this method and have found their enthusiasm and creativity to be both productive and effective. A third method, if the faculty and administration are available and if their schedules allow, is to have the play presented by them. No memorization of parts is necessary. They can simply read from their scripts as they act out the parts. I prefer this latter method of presentation. It's fun. It's productive. It involves more people in the presentation of this program. Whatever method is used, and I'm sure there are more than mentioned, the focus is not only to teach the concepts involved but also to have fun with it. The costumes for the various roles can be very simple. For example, grocery bags can be cut up and decorated to make the heads of the various "monsters". Butcher paper can be used to make full body costumes. Just to be on the safe side, you may want to make large "identification badges" in the event certain "monsters" are not recognizable.

When the play is completed, have the participants identify the words associated with the letters in S-M-I-L-E. Point out the relationship between S-M-I-L-E and the life process described throughout Part II.

Also, I would suggest an oral review of all the "monsters" in the play.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: THREE WAYS TO LIVE YOUR LIFE MORE HAPPILY (GUARANTEED OR YOUR OLD SELF IMAGE RETURNED WITH NO QUESTIONS ASKED.)

1. CHALLENGING (IRRATIONAL BELIEFS)
2. STRETCHING (TAKING A RISK)
3. EMULATING (FINDING MODELS FOR LIVING)

1. CHALLENGING (IRRATIONAL BELIEFS)

GIVE AN EXAMPLE IN YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU COULD USE THE CHALLENGING, POSITIVE VISIONS LISTED BELOW TO LIVE LIFE MORE HAPPILY. TO HELP WITH THIS EXERCISE, AN EXAMPLE IS PROVIDED.

"I'M STRONGER THAN THIS."

MY EXP: YESTERDAY I HAD MORE WORK TO DO THAN I HAD TIME TO DO IT. I FELT OVERPOWERED AND BURIED. NEXT TIME I'LL THINK, "I'M STRONGER THAN ALL THIS WORK."

YOUR EXP: _____

_____

_____

"YOU CAN'T MAKE ME STINK" (author, Julie Hanel)

MY EXP: RECENTLY SOMEONE CALLED ME AN UNCOMPLIMENTARY NAME. I FELT EMBARRASSED AND ANGRY. NEXT TIME I'LL THINK, "YOU CAN'T MAKE ME STINK."

YOUR EXP: _____

_____

_____

"I CAN'T PLEASE EVERYONE"

MY EXP: A FRIEND OF MINE WAS UPSET BECAUSE I ALREADY HAD PLANS SO I COULDN'T GO GOLFING WITH HIM. I FELT GUILTY. NEXT TIME I'LL THINK, "I CAN'T PLEASE EVERYONE."

YOUR EXP: _____

_____

_____

"I'VE HAD A HEADACHE, TOO."

MY EXP: A FRIEND SAID SOME UNKIND THINGS TO ME. I FELT HURT AND SAID SOME UNKIND THINGS BACK. NEXT TIME I'LL TELL MY SELF, "I'VE HAD A HEADACHE, TOO."

YOUR EXP: _____

_____

_____

I'M AN ACTOR, NOT A REACTOR."

MY EXP: MY BEST FRIEND SEEMED UPSET AND ANGRY ALL DAY. SOON I WAS UPSET, TOO. NEXT TIME I'LL TELL MYSELF, "I'M AN ACTOR, NOT A REACTOR."

YOUR EXP: _____

_____

_____

"I CAN CHANGE MY WORDS."

MY EXP: "I DIDN'T FINISH A TASK ON TIME. I TOLD MY SELF, 'I SHOULD HAVE FINISHED,' AND I FELT GUILTY. NEXT TIME I'LL TELL MY SELF, 'I CAN CHANGE MY WORDS,' AND SAY INSTEAD, 'I WISH I HAD FINISHED BUT I DIDN'T.

YOUR EXP: _____

_____

_____

EXPLANATION: As we begin these last exercises, I'm sure it's apparent that this program is only the beginning. It's a nudge in the direction of what I believe to be better mental health. This exercise, like the previous ones, presents the game plan, but successful mental health, just like any other goal, takes work and practice to achieve (Show me a grumpy old man and I'll show you a person who practiced grumpy as a boy). Use this exercise to support the understanding that a positive SELF image belongs to those who choose to see life

positively and speak to their SELF in positive ways.

It's necessary that the participants recognize and believe in the strength of their SELF ("I'm stronger than this."). In this way, life's surprises don't overpower. They only present challenges to be met head on.

With a positive SELF image comes the realization that other people don't determine your value ("You can't make me stink."). With this vision comes the realization that you alone determine your value.

The acceptance of SELF allows freedom from manipulative tactics of others and the realization that we are all responsible for our own happiness ("I can't please everyone.").

A positive SELF image allows for criticism from others without shattering results to SELF or the need to strike back in SELF defense ("I'm an actor, not a reactor.").

A vision of the goodness of SELF allows for the vision of the goodness of others. Negative acts can be seen as manifestations of emotional pain, not as personal attacks, and empathy can take the place of revenge ("I've had a headache, too.").

The words used to describe our life are a reflection of our vision of life and the way we talk about our SELF, others and the things and events in our life is clearly a choice ("I can change my words.").

The examples given provide a guide for completion of this exercise. Ask the participants to fill in the blanks with their own examples. Emphasize that the positive visions provided ("I'm stronger than this," etc.) are not meant to be said to someone else. They are to be said to SELF. If believed and practiced, these visions become habitual and replace debilitative beliefs like "I can't stand it when . . ." Happiness in living lies within the attitude about life.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: 2. STRETCHING (TAKING A RISK)

TODAY I'M GOING TO STRETCH JUST A LITTLE BY . .

_____

EXPLANATION: Stretching is simply taking a risk to go beyond your believed limits. It's a willingness to do something just for the sake of doing it without being hindered by the fear of failure or rejection. Stretching comes in all sizes. There are little stretches like saying "Hello" to a stranger. There are medium stretches like buying and wearing something you like rather than only that which is stylish. And there are bigger stretches like going out for a sport just for the fun of it even if you may not be "the best" or "running" for an office even if you may not be the most popular.

The motto of the stretcher is, "If it's right and reasonable, do it . . . or at least try it." (Thank you, John Powell.)

I am told that the Talmud (the collection of ancient Rabbinic writings) says that man will be held accountable for all the permitted joys he failed to experience. Don't be cheated out of permitted joys because fear of failure or rejection has kept you from stretching.

Ask the participants to take a risk and stretch, at least a little. A blank is provided for them to write in their chosen stretch.

(NOTEBOOK) EXERCISE: 3. EMULATING (FINDING MODELS FOR LIVING)

TWO OF MY MODELS ARE:

_____

_____

EXPLANATION: Emulating is the process of finding people who live their life in a way you admire, discovering their vision of life and then practicing that vision. This has nothing to do with extrinsic living such as success in sports, accumulation of wealth or any other sort of fame or fortune. Emulating, or modeling, has to do with the intrinsic quality of life. It's finding

people who are alive with life. It's finding people who worry less and enjoy more. It's finding people who have a healthy vision of life.

Models for living may be living or dead. If they are dead, read about them and try to discover how they thought and talked about life. If they are living, and accessible, talk to them, ask questions, discover the "secret" of their vision of life.

Some persons may serve as models for only certain areas of your life, areas where your vision results in negative reactions to life. For example, I am very, very concerned about security (stable job, money, etc.). Sometimes I worry about it so much it gets in the way of enjoying life. I have a friend who doesn't worry about security. I asked him why he seems peaceful while I suffer stress. He shares his attitudes and beliefs about security with me. I am learning from his vision. He is one of my models. When I drive in heavy traffic, I often become irritated and upset. I have a friend who remains calm and peaceful no matter what the condition of the traffic. I asked her why she doesn't become upset when the cars slow to a snail's pace. She shares her thoughts with me. She is another model for me and I'm learning from her vision.

If I were to die today, the eulogy I would wish for my SELF is "He was a gentle person." I want to be gentle so I look for models whom I believe know the secret of gentleness and peace.

Two people from the past I believe had these qualities are St. Francis of Assisi and Mahatma Ghandhi. I read about these men and try to learn their vision of life.

Finding models and discovering their vision is a helpful method of challenging our own vision of life and learning to live more fully.

I am pleased that many past participants in this program choose their parents and teachers as models for living. This is a tribute to parents who have a responsibility for sharing and modeling a healthy,

facilitative vision of life. It's also a tribute to teachers who have chosen to do more than teach subject matter, but have also chosen to share their "secret" of living. Thank you for reading this SELF IMAGE PROGRAM and for your willingness to share your vision.

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APPENDIX

The S-M-I-L-E Play

NARRATOR: This is a story about monsters. Not your everyday hairy-scary monsters, but truly unpleasant creatures whose purpose in life is to bring unhappiness, saddness and displeasure to others. And, as you shall learn, these monsters are so tricky and devious they very often succeed in their purpose and an otherwise healthy, happy person whines up whiney and worried . . . that is, woesomely dis-combooberated.

And now, the story.

Once upon a time two healthy, happy kids, Farley and Freida by name, were playing Frisbee. Farley, on a poorly aimed, though energetically thrown, toss, threw the frisbee over Freida's head, and it went right into the nearby woods--the Frisbee, that is, not Freida's head. It is in these woods that the strange and cunning monsters live.

FREIDA: What an energetic though poorly aimed toss, Farley. Now we'll have to find our Frisbee in the woods.

FARLEY: WHOE! FAT CHANCE! Forget it, Freida. I've heard there are monsters in those woods that do funny things to your mind.

FREIDA: I don't believe that. I don't think there are any real monsters in these woods. I think they're just imaginary.

FARLEY: Well you can just imagine that I'm in the woods with you looking for the Frisbee because I'm staying right here.

FREIDA: Stop kidding around, Farley. I don't think anything is going to happen. You can stay if you like, but I'm going to get our Frisbee.

FARLEY: O.K. If it's that important to you, I'll go with you.

FARLEY AND FREIDA ENTER THE WOODS

FREIDA: I hope we find it . . .

FARLEY: Before the monsters find us.

FREIDA: Look, Farley. I think I see it over by that tree. I'll go get it.

(ENTER THE SHOULD MONSTER. HE LEAPS OUT SCREAMING AND HOLLERING)

SHOULD: I am the SHOULD MONSTER and you are in big trouble buster . . . and bustess.

FARLEY: (Nervously) Wwwwwhat dddddo yyou wwwwwwwwwwwant?

SHOULD: I want you to be unhappy and whiney and believe me, I get what I want. Now stand still. I'm going to put a "SHOULD CURSE" on you:

Should power begin to flower
Inside their little head.
Life sublime
Turn to slush and slime
When ever the "shoulds" are said.

There. I'm finished. You're cursed.

FREIDA: (spoken with doubt and fear) I didn't feel anything. Are you sure you cursed us? You're just trying to scare us, aren't you? You SHOULDN'T go around telling people you've cursed them. You SHOULD BE NICE.

SHOULD: Good! Great! Hot Dog! You're cursed alright. I'm surprised the curse worked so fast though.

FREIDA: What are you talking about? I don't understand.

SHOULD: You have the SHOULD CURSE. You will no longer see life's surprises as challanges. Instead you will insist (make that demand) that life be the way you believe it should be.

FREIDA: You're crazy monster.

SHOULD: Maybe so. Maybe so. But shouldhood is nogoodhood. The more "SHOULDS" you say, the less good you see.

FREIDA: You SHOULDN'T TALK like that you no good monster. You're scaring me.

SHOULD: Well said, Freida. You're cursed for sure. Keep those "shoulds" coming, and you won't be miserly with the misery. Well, another job well done. I've got to run now. It really has been fun. I hope you didn't enjoy it. (EXITS GLEEFULLY)

FARLEY: Well, I hope you're satisfied Freida. I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO YOU, Freida. We SHOULD have just forgotten that old Frisbee. We SHOULD never have come into these dumb woods.

OWL: Who.

FARLEY: Us, that's who.

OWL: Who.

FARLEY: What's wrong with you, Freida?

Freida: I didn't say anything. He did. (Points to the owl)

FARLEY: Who?

OWL: That's my line kid. I'll bet you just met the Should Monster.

FREIDA: What kind of place is this? Owls SHOULDN'T be able to talk. And how did you know we met the Should Monster?

OWL: Well in the first place this is a nice place. In the second place, I SHOULD be able to talk because I do talk. And in the third place I knew you met the Should Monster because you're all upset and whiney and complaining. All typical symptoms of that dumb Should Curse.

FARLEY: So we are cursed!

OWL: Oh no. Absolutely not. You're just fine. A little confused maybe, but just fine. As you can plainly see, I'm not cursed and I've been around this place for years. Would you be interested in knowing why I'm not cursed?

FREIDA: Well . . . yes. I suppose we would. Why?

OWL: Because I'm not a bird brain (Chuckle, Chuckle, Chuckle). Oh my. A little levity at a time like this is usually beneficial. What I mean to say is, I'm too smart to be tricked by that boisterous, bunch of baloney.

FREIDA: You SHOULDN'T be joking at a time like this Owl. What are we going to do?

OWL: The first thing you can do is stop saying, "Should."

FREIDA: You mean we shouldn't say, "Should"?

OWL: No. I mean it would be a good idea if you didn't say should.

FARLEY: There's a difference?

OWL: You bet your beak there is.

FREIDA: Do you mean we're upsetting ourselves just by saying the word "Should"?

OWL: Actually, it's more than just using the word "Should." It's also the attitude or belief behind the word.

FREIDA: This is getting really complicated.

OWL: It's more tricky than complicated. The Should Monster tricks you into believing you can't cope. So, you say, "This shouldn't be" and "That should be."

FARLEY: I think you're right, owl. I guess I am upset because I believe I shouldn't have listened to Freida and we shouldn't be in these woods.

OWL: Of course I'm right. I'm no Do Do Bird you know.

FREIDA: Well a lot of good it does us to know we're upsetting ourselves by saying, "We shouldn't be in the woods." We still are in the woods.

OWL: So you have a problem - you're in a situation you don't like. All I'm suggesting is that you face the problem head on rather than insisting that the problem "shouldn't" exist.

FREIDA: You want us to challenge the Should Monster, right?

OWL: Exactly! Don't be afraid of situations you don't like. Face them bravely and honestly.

FARLEY: O.K. How about this? "I don't like being in these woods. It's unfortunate. It's not what I want. Now let's do something about it."

OWL: That's how you beat the Should Monster.

FREIDA: And what we're going to do is walk right out of these woods and leave that crazy Should Monster behind.

OWL: That's a good idea but I doubt if you'll escape without running into more monsters.

FARLEY: More Monsters! I Don't believe it! I Can't handle this! This Shouldn't be happening to us!

OWL: There you go again. Don't upset yourself so. You're becoming a certified neurotic. Allow me to share a poem my Daddy taught me as I sat at his wing. He was the Feathered Philosopher of the Forest. He said,

When my demands get out of hand
And to change I am too lazy.
I must confess, I'm most distressed
To find I get slightly crazy.

Don't be lazy and you won't go crazy with all kinds of imaginings. You can get out of these woods easily. Just use your noodle.

FARLEY: Well, maybe we won't see any monsters. Maybe they're not even around here.

OWL: You're surrounded by them.

FREIDA: That's a real bummer, We were such nice sweet, happy kids but with all those monsters confusing our thinking, we'll probably end up real tweeks. I don't want to be tweeky.

OWL: You're not a tweek and you won't be tweeky if you just learn to SMILE.

FARLEY: I already know how to smile (demonstrates), but it didn't help with the Should Monster.

OWL: It's not something you do with your face. It's a system you can use to keep away the monsters and take charge of your life.

FREIDA: Will it help us to become the wonderful, beautiful and lovable kids we were before we came into these woods?

OWL: That's what it's all about. See if you can follow this. The "S" in SMILE stands for "Something Happens." The "M" stands for "Monsters." They're not real monsters but monsters of the mind. Crazy thinking and words that upset you like "should." Are we all together?

FREIDA: Let's see. Something happened--we came into the woods. Next, we met a monster, the Should Monster.

FARLEY: And we believed we were in trouble and started saying "We shouldn't be here!" and the next thing we knew we were afraid and angry.

OWL: That's right. And that's what the Likeable or Life Supporting "I" stands for, "I feel." The next letter is "L" for Likeable or Life supporting thoughts. If you don't like how you feel, you can chase out the monsters with Life supporting thoughts and you're on your way to a SMILE.

FARLEY: What if we can't do that?

OWL: That's what the "E" in SMILE is all about. Expect it of yourself. So you see, if you SMILE, you can get out of here the same way you came in--sweet, nice and happy kids.

FREIDA: Thanks OWL. WE'll try out one of your SMILES if we run into any more monsters.

OWL: Good because you'll be seeing more monsters before you get out of here. These woods are full of them.

FARLEY: Thanks for everything OWL. Follow me Freida. I think this is the way we came in here.

(ENTER THE AWFUL AND TERRIBLE MONSTERS. THEY GRAB FARLEY AND FREIDA)

AWFUL and TERRIBLE: Gotcha, you varmints you.

FREIDA: Are you going to curse us, too?

AWFUL: If you like. You blankety, blank, blank.

TERRIBLE: Get serious, Awful. We've got a job to do here.

AWFUL: Seriously folks, we've been asked by the Monster Community to lay a terrible-awful curse on you. We would appreciate your cooperation.

FARLEY: What do you want from us, you terrible and awful monsters?

TERRIBLE: Just stand still a minute while we get into your heads-so to speak. O.K. Here goes.

Your view of life is yours to choose,
The pits, a challenge, whatever.
We hope you see it as terrible and awful
'cause then you're cursed forever.

Thank you. The pleasure was ours. (Exit)

FREIDA: Do you suppose they got to us? Are we cursed?

FARLEY: I don't know. Crymaknee! This is awful. Phooey! Of all the terrible things to have happen . . .

FREIDA: Let's find the Owl. He'll know how to get us out of this awful mess. Wouldn't it be terrible if we couldn't find him? I can't stand much more of this.

FARLEY: There's the Owl! Owl. Help us. Something terrible has happened.

FREIDA: It's really awful.

OWL: I know. I know. You met the terrible and awful twin monsters.

FARLEY: That's right. How did you know?

OWL: Do I have to remind you that I'm an owl--not a Feather headed fowl? Anyway, I'm tired of you two. Go away. Leave me alone.

FREIDA: But Owl. Don't desert us now when we need you most. That would be an awful thing to do.

OWL: Tough! I could hardly care less!

FARLEY: This is terrible. What will we do? I can't stand being treated like this. This is the worst thing ever!

OWL: Now don't get yourselves all worked up. I just wanted you to see what you're doing to yourself.

FARLEY: What do you mean, "To ourselves"? It's what you're doing to us. Besides we've been cursed again.

OWL: First of all, as I told you before, those monsters didn't curse you. It's all in your head--just like with the Should Monster. Secondly, I haven't upset you. You're upsetting yourself by believing it would be awful and terrible if I didn't help you.

FREIDA: It would be awful. It is terrible.

OWL: No. No. No. Everything is just fine. Because you believe this is an awful mess, in your mind it is an awful mess. The truth is, nothing is any worse than you choose to make it.

FARLEY: That's a terrible thing to say.

OWL: There you go again.

FARLEY: Well it is. Some things are terrible. What if this forest burned down?

OWL: Well, what if it did?

FARLEY: That would be awful. . . wouldn't it?

OWL: You said it. Not me.

FREIDA: Don't you think it would be awful?

OWL: YOU'VE GOT IT!!! It would be awful only if I THINK it's awful. If you think it's awful to be cursed, you will believe it's awful and you will feel awful.

FREIDA: YOU don't think it's awful because YOU"RE not cursed.

OWL: And neither are you. Those Monsters have just got in your head and caused you to THINK things are awful and terrible.

FARLEY: This is all very confusing.

OWL: You're feeling confused because your thinking is confused.

FREIDA: It's all in our heads again. Right, Owl?

OWL: That's right. They're getting you to say things like "awful" and "terrible" when in fact things are only unpleasant, inconvenient, and not at all what you would like.

FREIDA: A lot you know, Owl. If we hadn't found you so you could explain what's happening to us, we would have been doomed to unhappiness. That would have been awful.

OWL: Freida, I'm flattered, but I'm not the only one that knows these monsters can't curse you. There's an eagle that could have told you, but he speaks way over everybody's head. Then there is also the snake in the grass who knows. . . but I don't think he would have told you anyway. He's such a snake-in-the-grass. No matter. You would have discovered

it yourself sooner or later just because you're smart enough to outthink the monsters, and use more logical, likeable, life supporting thoughts.

FREIDA: O.K. I suppose you're right--awful is just a thought in my head. But what if we were cursed? What if we couldn't find our way home? Wouldn't that be awful?

OWL: "What if" isn't reality, "what is" is reality. Life is as awful, or as wonderful, as you want to make it. I can't think of one good reason you would want to see it as awful when you have that choice.

FARLEY: I can't either, I guess. I think we understand, Owl. Thanks for everything. No offense intended but we're leaving this place you call home. I can't stand it here.

OWL: No offense taken but you still don't understand.

FARLEY: What do you mean?

OWL: You said "I can't stand it here." That's not true. It's a lie. And it's that kind of lie that frightens you--not this place.

FARLEY: That's not true. We don't lie.

OWL: When you say "I can't stand it" you're lying to yourself. Look, if I swoop down, grab you by the pants and carry you up about 20,000 feet and then I drop you in the middle of a freeway where cars and trucks run over you--THAT'S something you can't stand. That's the truth. But you simply don't like these woods and that's the truth. If you tell yourself you "can't stand being here", you'll scare yourself silly. . . . .silly.

FARLEY: O.K. I've got it--tell it like it is. Be honest.

FREIDA: Stop scaring ourselves with words, right?

OWL: You've got it. It's all in your head. You've got the power over those monsters.

FARLEY: Thanks owl. We're on our way and this time I think we can make it.

FREIDA: Goodbye Owl. Follow me Farley. The path is very near here. I'm sure we can find it.

FARLEY: I wonder where the path went?

(ENTER THE ALWAYS-NEVER-FOREVER MONSTER. It is busily eating.)

FREIDA: There's the problem. Look at that ugly thing. It seems to me it's eating everything it sees. I'll bet it even ate the path. Are you frightened?

FARLEY: Not too much. I'm trying to keep the frightening thoughts out of my head. Let's confront this monster head on. Let's challenge him with likeable thoughts just like Owl taught us.

FREIDA: Good idea. Hi, monster. We're Freida and Farley. We know you're going to try and get inside our heads and try to mess us up. To be honest, we are a little frightened but we think we can handle it with challenging and likeable thoughts. So go ahead and do your thing and we'll SMILE.

A-N-F: You're going to do what?

FREIDA: SMILE. We're going to defend oursleves from your curse with a SMILE.

A-N-F: You've got me all wrong. I'm not out to hurt anyone. I'm just a lonely monster. That's why I am always eating everything in sight--trying to eat away my loneliness.

FREIDA: Well, you're not eating everything! There's some poison oak over there. There's some briers. There's a thistle. There's a toad stool. Oh look, there's the toad. And over there--------

A-N-F: QUIET!! You're a real wisenhiemer, little girl.

FREIDA: I was merely trying to point out that you're not telling yourself, or us, the truth when you say "everything". It's probably exactly that kind of talking to yourself that causes your loneliness.

A-N-F: I'm always running into smarty pants like you. You're ticking me off.

FREIDA: There you go again bending the truth. I'll bet you don't always run into people like me.

A-N-F: Are you crazy or what? What are you talking about?

FREIDA: If you believe everybody is a smarty pants, and a nogood-nik and they're out to get you, you'll avoid everybody and of course you'll be lonely. The truth is that while some people may be out to get you most people either don't care or may even like you.

A-N-F: The truth is-----I'm lonely.

FARLEY: I'm sorry to hear that. But all you have to do is SMILE.

A-N-F: I'm lonely and he wants me to SMILE. What an INSENSITIVE BRAT.

FREIDA: He doesn't mean smile. . . he means SMILE - Chase out the monsters or rethink the way you talk to yourself about life.

A-N-F: You insult me in front of my face. How can I chase out the monster when I am a monster.

FREIDA: NO NO NO! I'm talking about the monsters you create in your head.

A-N-F: Hey, I don't have anything in my head.

FREIDA: I don't know about that but I do know that you feel sad and lonely because you make yourself sad and lonely---- you choose to be sad and lonely by your foolish thinking.

A-N-F: What do you think, I'm nutso or something. I wouldn't be sad and lonely if I really had a choice.

FARLEY: You do have a choice. You choose how you want to talk about life. You've chosen to use words like always, never and forever and so you say, "Everything always happens to me" "I never get a break" and such foolish sentences as that.

A-N-F: Are you saying I can change the way I feel by changing the way I talk?

FREIDA: You've got it friend. Try it. It works.

A-N-F: Well I can try but I always mess up. I never do anything right.

FARLEY: Always? Never?

A-N-F: Well. . . .it happens a lot. . .and I usually mess up.

FARLEY: That's great! That's much better than saying "always" and "never".

FREIDA: We've got to go monster. Good luck.

A-N-F: Thanks a lot kids. I'm going to treat myself better from now on, and talk to myself more honestly about my life.

(Walks off: "Not always but often; not everyone but some; not never but sometimes".)

FARLEY: This has been one wacky day. I think the way out is over here.

(ENTER THE LABELING LIZARD)

FREIDA: Have you noticed, this place is filled with monsters? What in the world is that?

LAB LIZ: I'm the Labeling Lizard you little creep. I get into people's heads so they give away my labels like "dummy, freak and weirdo".

FARLEY: Hey, you've been in my head. Remember that time I called you stupid, Freida?

FREIDA: I remember. I've used a few labels of my own - tweek, dip and weiner.

LAB LIZ: That's how I work. I get one person to use a label and others just seem anxious to join in. Having others do my work is the only sensible way to do it. Otherwise, I'd run my little lizard legs right off. Us lizards aren't exactly sprinters you know.

FARLEY: That's not very nice, Lizard.

LAB LIZ: Well, it's just that I don't like myself very much and I feel put down so I put others down too.

FREIDA: So talk to the Owl, Lizard, he'll teach you to like yourself better with a SMILE.

LAB LIZ: I'll make a feather sandwich out of that bird before I smile. (Exits)

(ENTER THE BLAMING BUZZARD)

FARLEY: Well, there he goes. I hope he learns to SMILE. What is that?

B.B.: He makes me so mad. They embarrassed me! That's boring. A-W-K-K. I'm the Blaming Buzzard.

FARLEY: Hi, Buzzard. Why don't you SMILE?

B.B.: How can I smile when everyone makes my life so miserable.

FREIDA: You're responsible for your life Buzzard. You make your life miserable.

B.B.: You make me mad talking like that.

FREIDA: No Monster, you make yourself mad.

B.B.: I do? How do I do that?

FARLEY: Well, it's a long story but sit down and we'll tell you.

B.B.: (Sits down)

NARRATOR: (Turn to beginning. The narrator begins reading again as someone passes in front of the group with a Large Sign: "the end" IT'S A BEGINNING!